This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

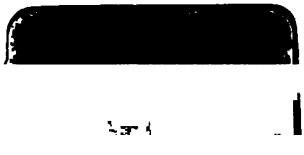
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

600071842S



THE

LORD MAYOR OF LONDON:

OR,

CITY LIFE IN THE LAST CENTURY.

BY

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH.

"By this light I do not think but to be Lord Mayor of London before I die."—*Green's The Quoque.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.
1862.

[*The right of Translation is reserved.*]

250. h. 82.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

BOOK I.—(*continued.*)

GUILDHALL.

XVI. PAGE

How the Lord Mayor's elder Daughters danced with the Young Princes; and how his youngest Daughter was presented to their Majesties 3

XVII.

How Herbert learnt that Tradescant had got into the Hands of Sharpers; and how Mr. Candish again appeared on the Scene . . 16

XVIII.

How Candish was brought before the King . . 28

XIX. PAGE

Of the mysterious Disappearance of Alice Walworth from the Ball 45

BOOK II.

THE CITY MALL.

I.

Old "Bow Bells" 59

II.

A Matrimonial Project 68

III.

Two Notes 84

IV.

In which Prue defends Tradescant 98

V.

What passed between the Lord Mayor and his Son 104

VI.

In which Mr. Candish appears in a new Character 118

VII. PAGE

THE LOWER WALKS IN MOORFIELDS 134

BOOK III.

TRADESCANT.

I.

MOSS AND LEVY'S 163

II.

PICARD'S 176

III.

THE ROOKS 195

IV.

FIRE 205

V.

AN HOUR'S DURANCE 214

VI.

CHAT AT BREAKFAST 224

VII.

HOW THE MATRIMONIAL PROJECT CAME TO AN END . 237

VIII.

PAGE

WOMEN OF THE WORLD 254

IX.

SMOOTH SPEAKING AND PLAIN SPEAKING. . . . 260

X.

AN INCENSED FATHER 274

XI.

PRUE 285

XII.

IN WHICH A DECISIVE STEP IS TAKEN . . . 292

THE

LORD MAYOR OF LONDON.

BOOK I.

(CONTINUED.)

GUILDHALL.

XVI.

HOW THE LORD MAYOR'S ELDER DAUGHTERS DANCED WITH THE YOUNG PRINCES; AND HOW HIS YOUNGEST DAUGHTER WAS PRESENTED TO THEIR MAJESTIES.

THE situation was embarrassing to his Majesty, and, to put an end to it, he rejoined the Queen in the outer room.

Shortly afterwards, the Common Hunt, who acted as master of the ceremonies, accompanied by the City marshal and two gentlemen of the Lord Mayor's household, entered to announce that all was prepared for the ball.

This information was a great relief to the King, and he expressed his desire that dancing should

commence forthwith, calling out good naturedly to the Queen,

"Come, Charlotte, the ball is about to begin. Though we don't dance, let us go and see the young folks enjoy themselves."

"With all my heart," replied the Queen, instantly rising.

On this the doors were thrown open, and the company respectfully drew back as the royal party passed out, preceded by the Lord Mayor. Close behind her Majesty followed the Lady Mayoress. The rest of the assemblage followed according to their degrees, but only a privileged few were admitted to the platform; the majority of the company proceeded by another passage to the body of the hall.

On their return to the hustings, the royal party were struck with surprise by the wonderful metamorphosis that had been effected in so short a space of time in the great hall; it being now converted into a magnificent ball-room, all the tables re'

moved, and carpets stretched across the pavement. Accommodation could therefore be afforded to a vast assemblage; but, large as it was, the space was not greater than needed, for all the fair occupants of the galleries, eager to participate in the pleasures of the dance, began to descend to the area below, so that it soon became densely thronged.

But the platform itself was likewise changed in appearance. The royal canopy was left, but the state table, with its superb ornaments, had been taken away, a fresh carpet spread over the floor, and the stage cleared for dancing.

Amongst those allowed admission to this privileged place — in addition to the immediate attendants on their Majesties—were the aldermen of the committee and the Lord Mayor's family.

As soon as their Majesties had seated themselves beneath the canopy, the Duke of York advanced to Lady Dawes, who was standing with the Duchess of Richmond on the right of the stage, and, with a very graceful though ceremonious bow,

claimed her hand for a minuet. Dropping a curtsey to the ground, her ladyship delightedly assented, and yielding him the points of her fingers, which he took respectfully within his own, they proceeded with slow and stately steps towards the centre of the platform, where his Royal Highness was joined by his brother, Prince William, who had gone through a like ceremony with Mrs. Chatteris.

The music then struck up, and the graceful dance commenced, exciting universal admiration from the vast assemblage in the hall, who had nothing at present to do but look on. No dance is so well calculated to display grace and elegance as the minuet. Why can it not be revived, and extinguish the everlasting waltz and outlandish polka? A thousand eyes being fixed upon the present performers, it cannot be doubted they would do their best; and we may add they acquitted themselves to admiration. Every move-

ment was noted, and when the dance was over, a buzz of approval ran through the hall. Of the two sisters, Lady Dawes was considered the most majestic, Mrs. Chatteris the most graceful. The Lady Mayoress could not tell which pleased her most. She was enraptured with both. They were matches for princes, she thought, and, forgetful of the bar to any such exalted union, she fondly persuaded herself that her dearest Livy might become Duchess of York. "'Tis plain his Royal Highness is enamoured of her," she mentally ejaculated. And as Lady Dawes encountered the Duke's ardent glance, and felt the pressure of his hand, she was of the same opinion, though she did not carry her folly to quite such lengths as her mother.

At the conclusion of the performance, her Majesty graciously observed to the Lady Mayoress that she had never seen the minuet better danced. The King likewise complimented the Lord Mayor

upon the grace and beauty of his daughters, and inquired whether they constituted the whole of his family.

"No, sir, I have another daughter, and a son," replied Sir Gresham, bowing.

"Are they here, eh? Present them! present them!" cried his Majesty, quickly. "The Lord Mayor has another daughter, Charlotte."

"Indeed," replied the Queen. "If she resembles her sisters she must be very good-looking," she added to the Lady Mayoress.

"Your Majesty makes me exceedingly proud," said Lady Lorimer, "but I fear you will not think my youngest daughter quite equal to her sisters."

"Well, let us see her and judge, madam," said the King. "And your son!—what of him, eh?"

"Your Majesty will excuse a mother's partiality if I speak in his praise——but here he is," she added, as Sir Gresham approached with Tradescant, and presented him to their Majesties, by both of whom he was very graciously received.

"A good-looking young man enough," observed the King, "but not exactly the sort of person I expected. He is not likely, I should think, to follow his father's business."

"I fear not, sir," replied Sir Gresham.

"Luckily, he will not be obliged to do so, sir," said the Lady Mayoress.

"But where's your daughter?" cried the King to the Lord Mayor.

"She is excessively timid, sir," said Sir Gresham; "so timid, that she dares not approach your Majesty—I must entreat you to excuse her."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed the King. "What is she afraid of? I shan't excuse her. Bring her at once."

Thus enjoined, Sir Gresham retired, and presently afterwards returned with Milly, looking very pale and frightened. The Queen's kind looks, however, reassured her, and the poor girl mustered up courage to press her lips to the hand graciously extended to her by her Majesty.

"Come here, my dear," said the King, saluting her; "you must overcome this timidity—borrow a little of your sisters' confidence. They can spare you some."

"Exactly what I say to her, sir!" exclaimed the Lady Mayoress. "I am constantly bidding her imitate her sisters."

"Take my advice, madam, and let her alone," said the king. "She is very well as she is, and can find her tongue on all fitting occasions, I make no doubt. I dare say your lordship is very well content with her," he added to Sir Gresham.

"I have every reason to be so, sir," replied the Lord Mayor; "and it is my earnest hope that she may retain her present simplicity of character."

"Quite right," said the King. "Well! have you nothing to say for yourself?" he added to Milly, with an encouraging smile.

The poor girl's heart was overflowing, but she was so confused that she could not give utterance

to her feelings. At last she stammered out, "I shall never forget your Majesty's kindness and condescension to me, and if I cannot find words to express my gratitude, I trust you will forgive me."

And with a profound curtsey to both their Majesties, she retired with her father.

"A very nice girl, Charlotte," observed the King —"a very nice girl—but rather too timid."

In which opinion the Queen coincided.

While this was passing, the Duke of York commanded a gavotte, and, changing partners with Prince William, they both resumed their places on the stage. Several young nobles joined them, and the music striking up, the sprightly dance commenced.

At the same time dancing began in the body of the hall, and was carried on as well as circumstances would permit, the crowd being too great to allow much room for display on the part of the performers. As soon as the gavotte was over, a

rigadoon followed, then another minuet, and next a jig—all these succeeded each other so rapidly as to task the powers both of dancers and musicians.

Amongst those engaged in the jig were Herbert and Alice Walworth, and overheated and somewhat fatigued by their exertions, they quitted the crowded hall and repaired to an inner room, where they were informed by an attendant they would find refreshments. The room was rather full, and amongst the company were Tradescant, with Wilkes, Tom Potter, and some others of young Lorimer's fashionable acquaintances. These gay personages were drinking champagne, laughing, and making somewhat impertinent observations on those around them. Not caring to approach such a rakish set, Herbert led his partner to the farther end of the table, where they obtained ices and fruit. However, they did not escape observation, for Wilkes, chancing to espy Herbert, said to Tradescant, "Yonder is your new-found cousin, I

perceive. A devilish pretty girl he has got with him. Who is she?"

"The daughter of a rich old hosier named Walworth, who dwells in St. Mary-axe," replied Tradescant; "vulgar people with whom one don't care to associate, though my father chooses to notice them. The girl, however, is well enough, and is accounted a belle at the Mall in Moorfields —ha! ha!"

"She is uncommonly pretty," cried Tom Potter. "Introduce me to her, Lorimer. I'll ask her to dance."

"Nay, I claim the right of being first introduced to the little beauty," cried Wilkes. "I discovered her."

"Don't fight about her, pray!" rejoined Tradescant, laughing. "I'll introduce both of you, and then she can take her choice."

"That will be the best plan," said Tom Potter, "for then I am sure to be victorious."

"Don't be too confident, Tom," cried Wilkes. "Ten to one she gives me the preference."

"Done!" rejoined Potter. "Guineas. Now for it, Lorimer!"

With this, the whole party, greatly diverted by the wager, proceeded to that part of the table where Herbert and Alice were standing. Making a low bow to the young lady, Tradescant begged permission to introduce his friends to her.

"Both are eager to dance with you, Miss Walworth," he said, "and neither will resign in favour of the other, so you must be pleased to make your own choice."

As Alice returned the salutations of the two gentlemen, she could scarcely help laughing at Wilkes's droll expression of countenance.

"Miss Walworth can't hesitate," said Tom Potter.

"She won't, I'm quite sure," rejoined Wilkes. "You rely on your good looks; I rely on my ugliness. She has just danced with a very hand-

some young fellow, so she will be glad to take me for a change. 'Twill be something to say you have had the ugliest man in town for a partner, Miss Walworth, so pray decide."

"Yes, yes, decide!" cried Tom Potter.

"Then I shall be very happy to dance with you, Mr. Wilkes," said Alice, giving him her hand.

"Bravo!" cried the ill-favoured wit, triumphantly. "I knew I should win. I betted ten to one that you had as much discernment as beauty, Miss Walworth, and you have proved me to be right. You owe me a guinea, Mr. Potter. Allons, mademoiselle, let us join the country-dance."

And he led her out of the room amid the laughter of his companions.

XVII.

HOW HERBERT LEARNT THAT TRADESCANT HAD GOT INTO THE HANDS OF SHARPERS; AND HOW MR. CANDISH AGAIN APPEARED ON THE SCENE.

ANNOYED by his cousin's supercilious manner towards him, and half disposed to resent it, Herbert made a stiff bow to the party, who replied to it with mock politeness, and was proceeding along the passage leading to the great hall, when he heard quick steps behind him, and, turning, perceived Tradescant.

"Stop a minute, sir," cried the latter; "I have a word to say to you."

"As many as you please," replied Herbert, halting.

"You cannot be unaware, sir, that your intrusion into our house this morning was exceedingly disagreeable to all the family, with the exception of my father and my youngest sister, and you will feel, therefore, that it is impossible there can be any intimacy with us. Excuse the hint I am compelled to give you, and be good enough to desist from further visits."

"If I consulted my own feelings, sir, you may rest assured I would never voluntarily expose myself to the repetition of such treatment as I experienced this morning from yourself and other members of your family," rejoined Herbert, coldly; "but I cannot act contrary to my uncle's injunctions, and since he has ordered me to come to him, I shall obey, however severely my patience may be tried."

"Oh! do as you please! I have cautioned you; and if you find the place too hot for you, don't

blame me. I fancied, from your former tone, that you set up for a man of spirit, but you now appear tame enough."

"You shall not provoke me, cousin," said Herbert, with difficulty restraining himself. "I can have no quarrel with you."

"Make an end of this, sir," cried Tradescant, fiercely. "I forbid you to call me cousin. I disclaim all relationship with you."

"So long as your worthy father is good enough to acknowledge me as his nephew, I shall not heed being disowned by you," rejoined Herbert.

"I was right, I find, in setting you down as a mean-spirited fellow," said Tradescant. "I must try other means of rousing you."

"For your own sake, forbear," cried Herbert, his eyes flashing, as he caught Tradescant's uplifted hand. "This is no place for a brawl. Remember whose son you are, if you are determined to forget that I am your kinsman. If you continue in the same mood to-morrow, I won't balk you."

"There is little likelihood of change on my part," rejoined Tradescant. "I give you credit for more prudence than I possess. Adieu, sir."

And he marched off, leaving Herbert, who had had enough to do to control himself, exceedingly chafed.

"I must calm myself," thought the young man. "If I join the assembly in my present state, I shall be sure to quarrel with some one."

Descrying a chair placed amid some flowering shrubs, arranged in a recess on one side of the passage, he went in and took possession of the seat. He had not occupied it many minutes when he heard voices and laughter, and presently afterwards some gaily-attired young men, who were coming loiteringly along the passage, halted near the recess. Herbert instantly recognised them as Tradescant's fashionable friends, whom he had just seen in the refreshment-room; but they did not perceive him, as he was partially screened by the exotics. Not desiring to overhear their discourse, he would have

coughed to make his presence known, if an allusion to his cousin had not caught his attention.

"Tradescant's ruin is certain," observed one of the speakers—it was Tom Potter; "he has got among a set of sharpers, who will fleece him of every shilling he possesses. I warned him against those two notorious rooks, Gleek and Bragge, but might have spared myself the trouble, for any good I could do. The pigeon *will* be plucked. How much does he owe you, Dashwood?"

"A few hundreds—I forget how much," replied Sir Francis.

"He owes me a thousand," observed Potter —"and Wilkes nearly as much. I doubt whether we shall get the money. Tom Chatteris tells me his father-in-law is difficult to manage. Tom hopes, however, that the Lady Mayoress will be able to wheedle her spouse out of the money. Chatteris, as you know, is desperately in debt. Between son and son-in-law, the Lord Mayor will be pretty well drained."

"Tradescant will drain him dry without any other assistance," remarked Sir William Stanhope. "Who would have thought such a steady-going citizen would have a thorough-paced gamester for a son! If Tradescant, as you say, has got into the clutches of those arrant cheats Gleek and Bragge, his fate is sealed. But it will be a grievous blow to his father."

"Poh! what does that matter?" laughed Tom Potter. "If the Lord Mayor has to come down pretty handsomely for his son's imprudences, it needn't give us any concern."

And the party moved on, leaving Herbert aghast at the revelations they had unconsciously made to him.

What was to be done? In the present confusion of his mind, he could not tell. All the speakers, who seemed to be perfectly acquainted with Tradescant's character, agreed that his ruin was inevitable. But might it not be averted? Was it too late to rescue him from the sharpers into whose hands he

had fallen? These were questions Herbert could not, of course, answer. But he determined to make the attempt; and he also determined that, so far as he could prevent it, his uncle should not suffer from Tradescant's indiscretions.

Full of these laudable resolves, he emerged from the recess, and scarcely heeding where he was going, proceeded towards the inner courts instead of to the hall. He had not gone very far when a side-door opened, and a little old man, in a shabby suit of black, whom Herbert took for an attendant, came forth. This personage, on seeing Herbert, stared very hard at him, and at last said:

"May I make so bold as to ask your name, sir?"

Herbert told him how he was called.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed the other. "Then you must be the Lord Mayor's nephew—the son of his elder brother, Godfrey."

"You are right," rejoined Herbert, staring at his interrogator in his turn. "But how do you know that?"

"You are very like your father, young man," rejoined the other, without heeding the question; "so like, that I knew you at once. I think I have heard that Godfrey Lorimer is no more?"

"Alas! it is so," replied Herbert. "But you seem to take a strange interest in me. Whence does it arise?"

"I take great interest in all that concerns the Lord Mayor," rejoined the old man. "I knew him as a boy, and I knew Godfrey at the same time. Don't be angry with me if I say that Gresham—the Lord Mayor, I mean—was the better of the two."

"Having proved the more successful in life, it may be inferred that his lordship has some good qualities that were wanting in my father," rejoined Herbert. "But there was another brother, Lawrence, whom perhaps you likewise knew."

"Yes, yes, I knew him," answered the old man, in a husky voice; "but he was a graceless fellow, not worth remembering. He ought not to be

mentioned in the same breath as Gresham—I mean, the Lord Mayor."

"Perhaps you may be doing him an injustice," said Herbert. "But since you seem to possess so much information about my family, you can tell me in all probability if my uncle Lawrence is still alive, and where he may be met with?"

"I can't tell you anything about him," replied the old man, hurriedly. "When I last heard of him, he was in very bad circumstances, and shunned by all who had known him in better days."

"The very reason I must find him out. Where was he when you heard of him last?"

"I don't recollect."

"Try," cried Herbert, eagerly. "You seem to have some dislike to my poor uncle. You know more about him, I am convinced, than you choose to tell."

"I!" exclaimed the old man, uneasily. "Isn't it enough that I have told you he is miserably poor? What more would you have?"

"You shan't go till you have answered my inquiries," rejoined Herbert, catching hold of him.

"I can't answer them, I tell you," exclaimed the old man, trying to break away. "Ah! there's the beadle," he added, with a look of affright, as Staveley was seen approaching them.

"Don't let him go, sir—don't let him go!" cried Staveley, hurrying forward. "The Lord Mayor wants him. You escaped me this morning, Mr. Candish, but you won't get off again in a hurry, I can promise you."

"What has he been doing?" demanded Herbert.

"Why, his first offence was getting drunk, and boasting of being the Lord Mayor's brother," replied Staveley. "His second offence was running away, and getting me into trouble."

"You've no right to detain me," cried Candish, almost fiercely, and struggling ineffectually to get free. "I've done nothing to deserve this treatment. I'll complain to the Lord Mayor."

"Just what I advise you to do," rejoined the beadle. "Why, I'm obeying his lordship's orders in detaining you. Behave yourself like a gen'l'man, and I'll treat you as such. You're the most wrong-headed, obstinate old man I ever had the misfortune to meet with. Keep quiet, will you?"

A light seemed suddenly to break upon Herbert, and he mentally ejaculated, "Is it possible this miserable creature can be my uncle Lawrence? Everything seems to lead to such a conclusion, and yet——"

"Listen to me, Herbert Lorimer," said the old man, in a totally different tone from that he had hitherto assumed. "You will understand, without necessity for further explanation on my part, why it is desirable the Lord Mayor should not see me again. It was highly imprudent in me to return, but an uncontrollable impulse dragged me here. I wished to have one more look at—at the Lord Mayor. It would have been my last."

There was something so strangely significant in

the tone in which the latter words were uttered, that both his hearers were impressed with the notion that the old man meditated some desperate act.

"The old fellow looks as if he meant to make away with hisself," whispered the beadle to Herbert. "It wouldn't be safe to let him go."

"I am quite of your opinion," replied Herbert. "Take care of him, but on no account treat him harshly, while I ascertain the Lord Mayor's wishes respecting him."

"Oh! Herbert, what folly are you about to commit!" exclaimed Candish. "If you have any feeling for the Lord Mayor, for me, for yourself, you will cause my immediate liberation."

"But he can't do it, I tell you," rejoined the beadle. "I don't mean to let you go without the Lord Mayor's orders. Your obstinacy is enough to provoke a saint. Keep quiet, I say."

"You shall learn his lordship's wishes directly," cried Herbert, hurrying away.

XVIII.

HOW CANDISH WAS BROUGHT BEFORE THE KING.

ALMOST at the precise juncture that the foregoing incident occurred, the King had been made acquainted with the strange meeting that took place earlier in the day between the Lord Mayor and his supposed brother. Some particulars of the occurrence had reached the ears of Sir Felix Bland, who could not help repeating them to Lord Melcomb, and he, in his turn, delighted at an opportunity of mortifying the Lord Mayor, lost no time in communicating them to the King.

"A singular circumstance occurred here this

morning, sir," observed his lordship. "It may amuse your Majesty to hear it. A man was locked up in the Little Ease—a cell adjacent to the chamberlain's court, in which refractory apprentices are sometimes confined—but when the matter came to the Lord Mayor's ears, with his usual goodness he immediately ordered the poor fellow's release. Imagine, however, his lordship's surprise—his utter amazement—when in the unfortunate prisoner he recognised — a long-lost brother. Yes, sir, a brother! His lordship will correct me if I am wrong, but this is what I have heard."

"Eh? what?" cried the king. "The Lord Mayor's brother a prisoner in the Little Ease?"

"Permit me to explain the matter, sir," said Sir Gresham, stepping forward.

"I hope I have not mentioned anything in the slightest degree disagreeable to your lordship," said Lord Melcomb, with a hypocritical look.

"I quite appreciate your lordship's motives," replied Sir Gresham. "I have no wish to conceal

anything from your Majesty," he pursued. "I do not blush to avow that I spring from a very humble origin. I by no means undervalue good birth, but I think good conduct ennobles a man quite as much as a good pedigree. Lord Melcomb, I am persuaded, will agree with me." This covert allusion to his want of birth made the Carlisle apothecary's son become redder than before. Without pausing, however, the Lord Mayor went on: "My father, an obscure tradesman—strictly honest—but unfortunate, had three sons, whom he brought up as well as his limited means would allow. The course of my brothers was different from mine, and led them into other paths. When I commenced life, and became actively engaged in business, they both quitted London, and I saw nothing more of them—neither did I hear from them. No misunderstanding having occurred between us, I could only account for their long-continued silence by the supposition that both must be dead. More

than forty years elapsed without my learning aught about either of them until to-day."

"Ah! now we have it," cried Lord Melcomb.

The Lady Mayoress, who was in an agony at this narration, darted an imploring look at her husband, but without effect. He went on:

"This morning, sir, two young persons presented themselves at my house, and claimed relationship with me as children of my elder brother. I bade them heartily welcome, and am glad to have a nephew and niece here to-night whom I did not expect."

"Did your amiable relatives bring their father with them?" inquired Lord Melcomb.

"Their father is dead," replied the Lord Mayor, "and on me devolves their future care."

"Then this occurrence has nothing to do with the prisoner in the Little Ease?" said Lord Melcomb.

"If your lordship will permit me to proceed,

you will learn. The incident you have detailed to his Majesty is substantially correct. I accidentally discovered that a man was shut up in that cell, and ordered his immediate release. To my infinite surprise and concern I found——"

"For Heaven's sake say no more," implored the Lady Mayoress, who had drawn near to him. "Respect my feelings, if you have no respect for yourself."

"Well! well!" cried the King, quickly. "What did you find, eh?"

"In the unfortunate individual who stood before me, I recognised my second brother, Lawrence, sir," replied the Lord Mayor. "It was a great shock to me at first, but I soon got over it, and offered him my hand. But from a feeling for which I can easily account, the poor fellow could not be brought to admit his relationship to me."

"Not admit it, eh?" exclaimed the King. "Then perhaps you may have been mistaken in him after all."

"I do not think so, sir," said the Lord Mayor. "However, it is curious that my poor brother—if it was he—should be lost again almost as soon as found, for though I left him here with every recommendation for his comfort, expecting to find him on my return from Westminster, he has disappeared, and what is more provoking, I have no clue to his abode."

"A good riddance!" muttered the Lady Mayoress.

"Your lordship may make yourself perfectly easy on that score," said the officious Sir Felix Bland, stepping forward. "Your nephew has just begged me to acquaint you that the individual about whom your lordship was inquiring on your return from Westminster has been found. Staveley has detained him, and awaits your lordship's instructions respecting him."

"What, is the man here?" cried the King. "I should like to see him."

"Nothing more easy, sir," replied Sir Felix,

bowing. "Will it please your Majesty to have him brought before you?"

"How say you, my lord?" cried the King to the Lord Mayor. "Have you any objection?"

"Not for worlds!" exclaimed the Lady Mayoress, in a whisper to her husband. "Make any excuse rather than submit to this indignity. I shall die if the wretch is brought in."

"My proposal, I see, is not agreeable to the Lady Mayoress," observed the King, "so I won't urge it. Still I should like to see the man, and question him. You have raised my curiosity."

"Your Majesty has only to signify your pleasure to be obeyed," said Sir Gresham.

The King hesitated for a moment, but, casting a glance at the Lady Mayoress, her agonised looks moved his compassion, and he had not the heart to persist.

"There will be a scene if I have him here," he mentally ejaculated. "I'll see him in private,"

he added, rising. "Let him be brought to the room where we took tea. I'll go there with the Lord Mayor."

"Your Majesty's injunctions shall be obeyed," replied Sir Felix. And with a lowly obeisance he hastened away.

"I trust I may be permitted to attend your Majesty," observed Lord Melcomb. "I should like to hear the dénouement of this strange adventure."

"Ask the Lord Mayor," rejoined the King. "If he allows it, you may come."

"I should be truly sorry Lord Melcomb should not be present, sir, since his lordship has taken such an obliging interest in the affair," observed Sir Gresham.

Attended only by the Lord Mayor and Lord Melcomb, his Majesty quitted the platform, and proceeded to the council-chamber. On entering the room, Sir Gresham gave directions to the

ushers stationed at the door that no one except Sir Felix Bland and the persons with him should be admitted.

His Majesty had scarcely taken his seat when the little alderman made his appearance, followed by Herbert and Candish. The old man trembled in every limb, and clung to his companion's arm for support.

"Take care what you are about, my dear sir," whispered Sir Felix. "You are in the King's presence. Make an obeisance, my dear sir, as low as you can."

"Oh, Heavens! Am I in a dream?" cried Candish. "My head swims, my senses desert me! Sustain me, Herbert, or I shall drop."

"Don't be afraid, brother," said the Lord Mayor, in an encouraging tone. "His Majesty has heard what took place this morning, and has graciously expressed a desire to see you."

"His Majesty is all goodness, and neglects not the meanest of his subjects—of that I am aware,"

rejoined Candish. "But, sensible as I am of his beneficence and condescension, I do not deserve that he should take any interest in me."

"Listen to me, Lawrence," said the Lord Mayor. "The singular circumstances of our meeting this morning have excited his Majesty's curiosity about you. Answer any questions he may deign to put frankly, and without reserve. Keep back nothing on my account, I beg of you."

"I am ready to answer his Majesty's interrogations," replied Candish; "but I think my wits must be clean gone, for I can scarce recollect what occurred this morning, except that your lordship mistook me for a long-lost brother."

"Then you maintain that you are not the Lord Mayor's brother?" said the King.

"Heaven save your Majesty—not I!" exclaimed Candish. "It would be a disgrace to his lordship to be connected with one like me."

"A truce to this, Lawrence," said Sir Gresham, angrily. "Speak the truth, man."

"What account do you give of yourself?" cried the King. "Who are you, eh?"

"I am named Hugh Candish, please your Majesty, and in the course of a long, and I may add, miserable life, have followed many occupations, but in none have I been successful. Misfortune has always tracked me, and if prosperity has smiled on me for a short time, it was sure to be followed by heavier calamity. How different has my career been from that of the Lord Mayor. We were boys together, and at that time my prospects were quite as good as his own, if not better. In him your Majesty beholds the results of industry, perseverance, and integrity. In me the lamentable consequences of want of steadiness, though not want of probity, for throughout all my struggles I have maintained an unblemished character."

"I am glad to hear it," replied the King. "But where has your life been passed—in London, eh?"

"No, sir, in different places," replied Candish. "I have been abroad for several years, and have dwelt in many cities—Paris, Rome, Naples, Madrid. On my return to my own country, I dwelt for some time at Bristol, and have only returned to London within these few months."

"What occupation do you follow, eh?" demanded the King.

"I blush to own it, sir, but I was last engaged at Shuter's booth in Bartholomew Fair."

"Not as a jack-pudding, or a droll, I should imagine?" observed Lord Melcomb.

"It matters little what I played," replied Candish. "I felt degraded, but I had no alternative except starvation."

"Why did you not apply to me?" said the Lord Mayor, in a tone of reproach. "But never mind. The worst is past, Lawrence. The rest of your days shall be spent in comfort."

"Again I thank your lordship from the bottom of my heart for your benevolent intentions towards

me," replied the old man; "but I cannot accept them."

"Not accept them! eh!—why not?" cried the King. "Are you too proud to be indebted to your own brother?"

"Pride has long been a stranger to my breast, sir," replied Candish, with an expression of deep humility; "but I cannot allow the Lord Mayor to be misled by his feelings."

"Then you mean to persist in your disclaimer of relationship to him, eh?" said the King.

"I am obliged to do, sir."

"And you, my lord, what say you? Have you altered your opinion, eh?"

"No, sir, not in the least," replied the Lord Mayor. "I am convinced that he is my brother Lawrence. He partly admitted the fact himself. He said he knew me as a boy, yet I remember no person named Candish."

"My name may have slipped from your lordship's memory. Very like. Yet still I was your

playmate and friend, and could mention many little circumstances which would bring me to your recollection."

"Not as Hugh Candish, but as Lorry Lorimer."

"Well, if your lordship *will* have it so, I must yield," replied the old man; "but I protest against the inference you draw."

"Have I leave to speak, my lord?" interposed Herbert; and obtaining the Lord Mayor's assent, he went on. "When Mr. Candish, as he chooses to call himself, first addressed me, he said he recognised me from the likeness to my father, while other observations which he let fall brought me to the same conclusion as your lordship—namely, that he is my uncle Lawrence."

"Is this your nephew?" inquired the King of Sir Gresham; and receiving an answer in the affirmative, he added, "A fine young man. I like his looks."

"I think your Majesty will only waste time in

pursuing this inquiry further," observed Lord Melcomb. "Apparently, no pressing will induce this Bartholomew Fair actor to make a confession. It is very droll, certainly. If the Lord Mayor had disclaimed the connexion it would not have been surprising, but that the other should do so is extraordinary."

"I agree with your lordship," said the King. "It would be idle to pursue the inquiry further now. When you have fully investigated the matter," he added to the Lord Mayor, "and satisfied yourself one way or the other, let me know the result; though I have little doubt in my own mind that you are in the right."

"To-morrow I shall be able to unravel the mystery," replied Sir Gresham, "and will not fail to communicate the solution to your Majesty. Do me the favour, Sir Felix, to cause Mr. Candish to be taken to my house in Cheapside—but mind! he must not be lost sight of."

"Your lordship need be under no apprehension,"

said Candish. "I shall not attempt to escape again."

"You are not to be trusted, brother," rejoined the Lord Mayor, with a pitying smile, "and must forgive me if I am compelled to put some little constraint upon your movements. We will talk the matter over quietly to-morrow, and then I feel sure we shall come to a right understanding."

"Unless your brother—if brother he be—has taken leave of his senses, you cannot fail to do so," rejoined the King. "He can have no possible motive for further concealment. Not one man in a thousand, I verily believe, would have acted as your lordship has done. Your conduct is noble."

On this, his Majesty quitted the council-chamber, and attended by the Lord Mayor and Lord Melcomb, returned to the hustings, and resuming his seat beside the Queen, recounted to her all that had occurred during his absence. The tone in which

he spoke was so loud, that the Lady Mayoress, who was standing near, lost not a syllable he uttered, and resolved, in the bitterness of her heart, that her first business should be to turn the old Bartholomew Fair actor out of the house.

XIX.

OF THE MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF ALICE WALWORTH FROM THE BALL.

ANXIOUS to see the Lord Mayor's directions respecting Candish fully carried out, Herbert did not lose sight of the latter until he had been taken off to Cheapside in charge of Staveley. This done, the young man felt himself at liberty to follow his own devices, and his first impulse was to look for Alice Walworth. His quest, however, was vain. The crowd was still as great as ever in the hall, and it was next to impossible to discover any particular person amidst such a throng. So

at last he gave up the attempt, and stationed himself near the steps leading to the inner court, thinking it possible he might catch a glimpse of her. But though he remained there nearly an hour, during which time a multitude of charming-looking girls, attended by their partners, passed and repassed, Alice was not among them. His patience at last becoming exhausted, he moved off towards the refreshment-room, and had nearly reached it, when he heard himself called, and turning, perceived Mr. and Mrs. Walworth. To his great disappointment, however, their daughter was not with them.

"Oh, Mr. Herbert, we're so glad to see you!" cried Mrs. Walworth, coming up. "We've been looking for you everywhere. But where's Alice? What have you done with her?"

"Hasn't she been with you, madam?" exclaimed Herbert, surprised. "I've not seen her since she went to dance with Mr. Wilkes—but that

is nearly two hours ago. I concluded she would go back to you."

"We have seen nothing of her at all, and should have been extremely uneasy, of course, if we hadn't made sure she was with you, Mr. Herbert," rejoined the lady. "Where can she be?"

"Nay, I'm sure I can't pretend to tell, my dear," responded Mr. Walworth. "As well look for a needle in a bottle of hay as attempt to find her amongst the crowd in the great hall. Plague take the girl! what a deal of trouble she does give one!"

"But she must be found, Mr. Walworth, she must be found."

"Certainly, my dear, she *shall* be found. But be good enough to explain *how* it is to be done. Perhaps Mr. Herbert will help us?"

"Oh, do, there's a dear, kind creature," cried Mrs. Walworth. "I'm getting so miserably anxious."

"I'll do my best, madam," Herbert replied; "but don't make yourself uneasy. No doubt she'll appear presently."

"No doubt she will," replied Mr. Walworth. "Let us sit down in the refreshment-room and wait for her there. She'll find us out, I promise you."

"I wonder you can take it so easily, Mr. Walworth. Something has happened to her, I'm convinced."

"How needlessly you distress yourself, my love. What *can* have happened to her?"

"I can't tell, I'm sure, but I'm growing terribly alarmed."

"Ah! here comes Mr. Wilkes," cried Herbert, perceiving the personage in question coming along the passage with several of his gay companions, "he may be able to give us some information respecting her. I'll see."

And hurrying towards Wilkes, he addressed his inquiries to him.

"What! is Miss Walworth lost?" cried Wilkes,

laughing. "You don't suppose she has eloped, eh?"

"I cannot allow any jesting at the young lady's expense, sir," rejoined Herbert. "Where is she? She was committed to your care, and you are, therefore, responsible for her."

"The deuce I am!" cried Wilkes. "I would have you to know, sir, that I hold myself responsible for no woman, young or old. A good joke it would be if a man must answer for his partner in a dance, as if she were his partner for life. You have chosen to question me so impertinently that I feel disinclined to reply to you at all, but in compassion for your ignorance, I will say that I know nothing about Miss Walworth. When she had done with me, she engaged herself to dance with some one else."

"Who was it, sir? I insist upon knowing. Come with me, and point him out."

"And do you really imagine, my agreeable

young friend, that I shall accompany you on such an errand?" returned Wilkes, with a sneer.

"I have not the least doubt of it, sir," rejoined Herbert, in a stern tone.

"Aha!" cried Wilkes. "You will have something to amuse you presently, gentlemen," he added, turning to his companions.

Happily, however, the dispute was cut short by Mrs. Walworth, who rushed up, imploring Wilkes to tell her what had become of her daughter.

"Really, madam, I am very sorry," he replied; "I can only tell you, as I have just told this impetuous young man, that your daughter left me to dance with some one else, with whom I was totally unacquainted, and whom I should not know again were I to meet him. That is the sum of my information, madam. I must beg of you to excuse me. If Mr. Herbert Lorimer has any further communication to make to me he will easily learn where I am to be found." So saying,

he made her a low bow, and marched off with his companions.

After this, Herbert instituted another search in the hall, but with no better success than before. He then mounted to the galleries and looked down amongst the crowd, but failed to discern Alice. As time wore on, Mrs. Walworth's uneasiness increased, and even the old hosier became alarmed. Sir Felix Bland, with some of the committee of aldermen, aided in the search, and it soon became apparent that Alice was gone. But where, or how, no one could tell. Wilkes was again sought for, but by this time he had gone too. After a long and fruitless search, Mr. and Mrs. Walworth were obliged to give up the matter in despair, and went home in a state bordering on distraction.

Long before this, the King, who always kept early hours, had departed. Their Majesties were ceremoniously ushered to their carriage by the Lord Mayor, with the sword of state borne before

him, by the sheriffs, and the aldermen composing the committee. On taking leave, the King warmly expressed his acknowledgments to Sir Gresham, adding emphatically, "I shall never forget your generous conduct to your poor brother."

Guildhall-yard was one blaze of light, all the lamps with which the surrounding buildings were covered being illuminated. Loud cheers were raised as the royal carriage drove away, escorted by a troop of Horse Guards.

The whole of the houses in New King-street and Cheapside were brilliantly illuminated — as indeed were those in every street through which the royal party had to pass on their return to St. James's. On many of the habitations were displayed large transparencies and loyal devices.

In consequence of these illuminations, which were extremely beautiful, especially in the City —and seen to great advantage, the night being singularly calm and fine—the streets were almost

as crowded as during the day; and though no doubt there were a good many persons who could not be complimented upon their sobriety, the behaviour of the majority of the concourse was orderly, and nothing occurred to dissatisfy their Majesties with their visit to the City. The train-bands still lined the streets as far as Temple-bar, though many of them, owing to the plentiful libations in which they had indulged, could scarcely preserve their equilibrium, and reeled off as soon as the royal carriage had passed by.

Shortly after their Majesties' departure, the rest of the royal family quitted Guildhall — though some little delay was experienced in getting up their carriages. On parting with her, the Duke of York said many gallant things to Lady Dawes, and carried off her fan as a souvenir, leaving her perfectly enchanted by his attentions.

Determined not to expose himself to a repetition of the annoyances he had undergone, Lord Bute

returned in a sedan-chair, and luckily escaped discovery, or he might have fared still worse than in the morning. Lord Melcomb adopted a similar mode of conveyance.

Mr. Pitt went back with Lord Temple, and hoped to escape detection, but being speedily recognised, the crowd surrounded his carriage as before, and shouted so vociferously that they roused many decent citizens from their slumbers; and these worthy folk, on ascertaining the cause of the uproar, threw open their windows, and waving their long cotton nightcaps, cheered lustily in concert with the throng below.

Thus was the Great Commoner's return as triumphant as his entry into the City.

The festivities in Guildhall were kept up for several hours longer, and it was past four o'clock before the entertainment was brought to a close. Sir Gresham, however, did not see it out. After the departure of Mr. Pitt and Lord Temple he

retired with the Lady Mayoress, and having ascertained that his supposed brother was safe and well cared for, sought repose after the fatigues and excitement of his first day of mayoralty.

End of the First Book.

BOOK II.

THE CITY MALL.

BOOK II.

THE CITY MALL.

prominent nose and eyes provided with spectacles, but the shopmen and apprentices had no difficulty in recognising him, even as he passed the shop window, and calling out to each other that "Old Bow Bells was coming," instantly ceased laughing and chatting, and some of the younger of them, vaulting over the counter, put on a very demure and business-like expression of countenance.

The person of whom these gentry stood so much in awe was Sir Gresham's manager, Tobias Crutchet—an old and much-trusted servant, who had lived in the establishment—in one capacity or other—for nearly fifty years. He had acquired the nickname just applied to him by the shopmen in consequence of making it a boast that he had never been, and never desired to be, beyond the sound of Bow Bells. The designation stuck; and Mr. Crutchet was known throughout Cheapside, on 'Change, at Lloyd's, and Garraway's, and at the quiet tavern where he smoked a pipe and drank a

single glass of punch at night, as "Old Bow Bells."

A few words must be devoted to this worthy fellow's history. At the time that our Lord Mayor was apprenticed to his future father-in-law, Mr. Tradescant, Tobias Crutchet was a porter in the house, and though a very young man then, was capable of giving advice and setting a good example to those about him, and Sir Gresham always declared that he mainly owed his rise to honest Toby Crutchet's precepts. As young Lorimer got on, we may be sure his humble friend was not neglected. Toby Crutchet very soon had a place behind the counter, and was gradually promoted —with a constantly increasing salary—until he became foreman and manager. In fact, Sir Gresham would have taken him into partnership, but Crutchet gratefully declined the offer, being perfectly content with his position, which was far better than in former days he could have hoped

to obtain. Moreover, he was unmarried, and had no relatives to provide for. Bound as he was by ties of strongest gratitude to his master, old Crutchet was equally attached to the rest of the family. He had known the Lady Mayoress, now expanded into a dame of such goodly proportions, as a pretty, lightsome girl, and had often borne her in his arms to church on a wet Sunday, and brought her home in the same way from a neighbour's house. Naturally, little Celia Tradescant was very fond of Toby Crutchet, for the obliging fellow did whatever she asked him. But when, some years afterwards, a certain marriage took place, Crutchet was nearly as proud and happy as the bridegroom himself. It was positive rapture to him to behold the young couple standing before the altar of Bow Church, and to see Mr. Tradescant give away his daughter. His next gratification was the christening of Olivia, at whose marriage with Sir John Dawes he assisted, some five-and-twenty years later. All his master's children

were dear to him as his own offspring could have been, but his favourite was decidedly Tradescant. Though the boy was a sad pickle, Toby Crutchet was ever ready to overlook his faults, and if possible screen him from blame or punishment, fondly persuading himself he would grow steadier in time, and become an exemplary character like his father. Even when Tradescant began to plunge into dissipation and extravagance, the old man, who was more fully aware of the extent of the youth's follies than Sir Gresham himself, would not give him up. Actuated by the same mistaken feelings that had influenced his conduct towards his favourite in earlier days, he now strove to conceal Tradescant's proceedings from his father. Whenever the young prodigal was in difficulties, he applied to Crutchet for assistance, and never in vain. The old man's savings were as freely lent as unscrupulously borrowed.

Unaccustomed to refusal, and regarding Crutchet as an inexhaustible source of supply, Tradescant

was surprised and provoked when the old man—only a few days before the commencement of our story—for the first time declined to let him have the considerable sum he required, or any part of it. The only reason he assigned for the refusal was one which Tradescant did not credit—namely, that it was not in his power to make further advances. So the young spendthrift railed at him very heartily, calling him a stingy old curmudgeon and a skinflint, and went away in a tremendous huff. The denial effaced all sense of gratitude for former favours from Tradescant's breast—if, indeed, he had ever felt grateful—and he now only regarded his assistant as an avaricious old hunks.

But Crutchet was deeply grieved—not by the abuse heaped upon him—for this he cared little—but by the utter recklessness exhibited by the young man. Yet while reproaching himself that he had not long ago acquainted Sir Gresham with his son's misconduct, he could not even now make up his mind to open his master's eyes.

Methodical in all his habits, Crutchet always entered the shop as Bow Church clock struck nine, and had not been known to vary for years. Originally a tall and strongly-built man, he was now somewhat shrunk and bent, as might well be, seeing he was upwards of threescore and ten, but he still looked robust, and might hope to hear the chimes of his darling bells for several years to come. When he took off his shawl and cloak he exhibited rather a gaunt person, arrayed in an old-fashioned snuff-coloured coat, with immense pockets and plated buttons, waistcoat and breeches of the same material, buckles at the knees, brown woollen hose, and square-toed shoes, with high quarters and large silver buckles. He was a dark-complexioned man, and wore his own iron-grey hair combed back from the forehead and tied behind in a queue. Spectacles, a hat shaped like a tin flour-scale, and a long cravat dangling down in front, completed his costume.

After glancing round the shop to see that all

was in its place, and asking a few questions of the shopmen, Crutchet marched into the counting-house, and gravely saluting the book-keepers, seated himself on a high stool, and opened a ledger.

While he was thus occupied, a note was brought him from the private part of the house by Tradescant's valet. It merely contained the words, "I must see you immediately." Crutchet heaved a sigh as he read the message, feeling that some fresh trouble was impending.

"Is your master up yet, Tiplady?" he inquired of the valet.

"No, sir; his honour is still a-bed," replied the man—almost as much of a coxcomb as his master—"but he begs you will come to him as soon as you can."

"I will wait on him immediately," replied Crutchet.

On this Tiplady departed, strutting consequentially through the shop, and winking to some of

the apprentices, who made comical gestures to him in reply. Crutchet remained for a few minutes in deep thought, debating within himself what he ought to do, but unable to arrive at any positive conclusion. He then closed the ledger, and unlocked a door at the back of the room, which admitted him into the private house. Avoiding the principal passage, which was environed by a multitude of the Lord Mayor's servants, he mounted a back staircase, and soon reached the second-floor, where Tradescant's room was situated. Tiplady was standing at the door, and at once admitted him.

II.

A MATRIMONIAL PROJECT.

TRADESCANT'S chamber was spacious, luxuriously fitted up, and so arranged as to serve the purposes both of bedroom and morning-room. At the farther end, on a superb French bed, with a rose-coloured canopy and curtains, and supported by large downy pillows edged with lace, lay the young prodigal. Near the couch stood a large Japan screen. But notwithstanding the richness of the furniture and decorations, great disorder reigned within the room. Thus a pink silk domino and mask, tossed upon a sofa by their wearer on

his return from a masquerade, had not been since removed. Articles of attire in velvet and silk of the gayest colours were lying scattered about near the open wardrobes, and so were rich Mechlin shirts and cravats. Half a dozen perukes appeared to have been tried, and for some fault or other cast aside. In one corner was a collection of gold-headed canes and walking-sticks; in another a pile of swords, several of them with handsome handles. Here there was a dressing-table, with all its appliances in crystal and chased silver. Beside it was a large cheval-glass, wherein our young beau could survey his fine figure from head to foot. On the chimney-piece was a magnificent Louis Quinze clock, and on the other side of it stood some exquisite specimens of Sèvres china, while on the right and left of the hearth were two great green porcelain jars. The walls were covered with portraits of popular actresses—Mrs. Yates, Mrs. Clive, Mrs. Bellamy, Mrs. Abegg, and Miss Macklin — intermingled with pictures of opera

figurantes, prize-fighters, cock-fights, and famous race-horses.

"Good morning, Bow Bells," Tradescant cried, as the old man entered the room. "Glad to see you. Bring a chair this way, and sit down."

Crutchet complied, and, gazing earnestly at the young prodigal, said,

"I am here at your bidding, Mr. Tradescant. But I hope, sir, you haven't sent for me in the expectation of getting money."

"Indeed but I have, Bow Bells. Without a good round sum I shan't be able to get on, and I don't know who else to apply to but you. Cash I must have, but I would rather not apply to the Jews."

"Oh no, sir! That mustn't be thought of," cried Crutchet, shaking his head.

"I've been devilish unlucky of late," pursued Tradescant. "Cards and dice have been always against me. Since I spoke to you last, I haven't won a guinea."

"But how many have you lost, sir? May I venture to ask that?"

"Here, take this, and you'll see," rejoined Tradescant, tossing his tablets to him. "Look at the last page."

Crutchet turned to the page intimated, and was so horrified by what he saw that he could not repress a groan.

"Heaven preserve us!" he ejaculated. "Here's a total of five thousand pounds and upwards."

"Ay, that's about it, Bow Bells," rejoined the young man. "Don't look so confounded glum; that won't mend the matter. You must get me out of this scrape, as you've done out of others before it. If I don't pay my debts of honour I shall be scouted—that you know as well as I do. Fortune has frowned upon me of late, but I am certain my luck will change to-day, and that I shall win."

"Oh, don't go on in this way, my dear young

gentleman; for your good father's sake—for your own sake—don't!"

"But I *must* retrieve my losses," rejoined Tradescant, wholly unmoved by the appeal. "To-day I am sure to win, I tell you, and then I'll repay you all you've lent me, worthy Bow Bells—principal and interest."

"I want neither principal nor interest, sir. But oh! let me entreat you, as you value your reputation, to forswear cards and dice in future."

"I'll *never* leave off a loser, Bow Bells," replied Tradescant.

"But if you never win, sir—how then?"

"I tell you I *shall* win. So cease preaching, and come to the point. Will you let me have the money? I know you can."

"Indeed, sir, I have not the power."

"Poh! this is a mere idle excuse, and won't pass with me. Say you *won't*, and then I'll believe you."

"There is no lack of inclination on my part, I

assure you, sir. All I ever possessed I owe to your good father. My poor services have been far overpaid by him. Therefore you have been welcome—heartily welcome—to all my savings. If I had aught left you should have it for the asking, though I deeply regret to see money so misapplied. But I have nothing—literally and truly nothing."

"Zounds! you don't mean to say this is really the case, Bow Bells?" cried the young man, looking fixedly at him.

"Alas! sir, it is too true. But in telling you this, I do not mean to convey any reproach. I am compelled to state the fact in order to prove my inability to help you. But oh! Mr. Tradescant, give ear, I beseech you, to the counsels of an old man who loves you dearly as a son, and would make any sacrifice for you. You are blessed with one of the best and kindest of fathers. Pause in your fatal career. Do not bring shame and sorrow upon him—do not—do not!"

"Did I not know you mean well, I should be

very angry with you, Mr. Crutchet," rejoined Tradescant, haughtily. "But in consideration of your motives, I forgive you. No more sermonising, however. I haven't patience for it."

"I trust you will never wring your father's heart as you do mine, sir," groaned the old man.

"Why, what the deuce would you have me do, you stupid old Bow Bells? I can't stop now, if I would. I must pay my debts, I suppose. How much do I owe you?"

"Never mind me, sir—never mind me."

"Well, you can wait, certainly. But the others won't. So the rhino must be had somehow. Harkye, Bow Bells! will you borrow the money for me from Shadrach, of the Old Jewry?"

"What! I go near the old Israelitish money-lender—not for the world, sir! No, Mr. Tradescant, there's only one course open to you, and that's the straightforward one. Confess your errors to your father—fully, freely. 'Twill be a great pang

to him, but he will forgive you—I am sure he will."

"I don't know that, Crutchet. My dad can be very obdurate if he pleases. When I last applied to him he was in a towering passion, and swore he would never help me again. And then, to mend matters, Captain Chatteris is hard up too, and means to ask for aid to-day."

"Lord bless us! and the captain has had his debts paid twice already! What will the world come to! We shall all be brought to rack and ruin by these young spendthrifts."

"Not so bad as that, Bow Bells," rejoined Tradescant, laughing. "Make yourself easy about me. I shall soon be all right. I've got a rich wife in view. Who do you think she is? You know her—or, at least, you know her father."

"Nay, I can't guess, sir. But I entirely approve your resolution. 'Tis the best thing you can do. But who may the young lady be, for I presume she is young?"

"Young and handsome, Bow Bells. She has only one drawback, namely, a vulgar old dad—but, to make amends for his vulgarity, he is astoundingly rich. Do you know old Walworth, the hosier, of St. Mary-axe?"

"Is it Mr. Walworth's daughter you have fallen in love with, sir? Oh! she'll do—she'll do."

"Yes, yes, I think she will do, Bow Bells. I abominate the notion of matrimony, but apparently there's no avoiding it. I've often seen Alice Walworth before, and thought her a fine girl, but the idea of marrying her never entered my head till last night, when I met her at Guildhall. I don't think it would have occurred to me then had I not been piqued."

"Well, sir, you can't do better, that's all I can say; and I'm of opinion the match will be agreeable to Sir Gresham. But what about the young lady, sir? Is she favourably inclined towards you?"

"She has more than half consented, Bow Bells.

You shall hear how the thing was managed. Yesterday was a day of adventures to the Walworths. A young fellow, who pretends to be a nephew of my father, suddenly turned up, and during the procession on the Thames to Westminster, managed to rescue Alice Walworth and her mother from drowning—their boat having been upset in the Thames. Such a daring feat was enough to give him a wonderful interest in a romantic girl's eyes, and I must do the young fellow the justice to say he is by no means ill-looking. Habited as he was last night in one of my best suits—confound his impudence in taking it!—he cut rather a fine figure, and it was quite evident had began to make an impression upon Alice's somewhat susceptible breast——"

"Indeed, sir," interrupted Crutchet—"that doesn't augur well for you."

"Wait a moment and you shall hear. Enraged at the assurance of this pretender, I had some words with him near the refreshment-room,

and, on quitting him, was determined to thwart his love projects. At that time Alice was dancing with a friend of mine, Mr. Wilkes, so I immediately went and engaged her for the next dance, and the moment she was surrendered to me by Wilkes, I laid desperate siege to her, vowing I had long adored her, and acted my part so briskly that I soon found I was getting ahead of my cousin. However, not to give him a chance, I resolved Alice should not dance with him again, and by good management contrived to keep her out of his way during the rest of the evening—making the most of my time all the while. He could not learn that Alice was dancing with me, as I had cautioned Wilkes on that head. Time flew by—so quickly that it was four o'clock in the morning before Alice recollected that she ought to look out for papa and mamma—and as I now felt pretty secure, I had no objection to her doing so. Accordingly, we went in search of them, when who should we stumble on but Sir

Felix Bland, who quite started at the sight of Miss Walworth, and told her her distracted parents had been looking for her everywhere, and had just gone home in despair. 'They couldn't have used their eyes to much purpose,' I said, 'or they must have seen her, for she has been dancing with me the whole evening.' 'Oh! that's it!' cried Sir Felix, with a knowing smile. 'However, Miss Walworth must go home directly.' 'I'll take her at once,' I said. 'No, that won't do,' he replied. 'I'll take her in my chariot—but you may go with us if you like, to explain matters.' This being settled, the good-natured alderman drove us to St. Mary-axe, and you may imagine the scene that ensued when Alice was delivered to her disconsolate parents—ha! ha! ha!" And he threw himself back on his pillow to indulge his laughter unrestrained.

"And was Mr. Walworth quite satisfied with the explanation, sir?" inquired Crutchet.

"He was too glad to have his daughter back

again to ask any questions. As to Mrs. Walworth, Sir Felix Bland, who I must say is the most obliging person in existence, soon set matters right with her. He told her I was quite smitten by Alice's charms, and insinuating that I meant to propose in form, appointed a meeting in the City Mall at half-past four o'clock to-day."

"I hope you won't disappoint them, sir. Ah, if you could but comprehend how much more respectable—how much happier you would be as a decorous domestic character than as a jaded votary of pleasure, thinking only of carding, dicing, racing, cock-fighting, operas, festinos, masquerades, and ballet-dancers, you wouldn't hesitate a moment. It was once my cherished hope that you would take the management of the concern down stairs——"

"What! I become a draper! Never, Bow Bells, never! I would as soon turn hosier like my respected father-in-law—that is to be—old Walworth. But, talking of the shop, Crutchet, I for-

got to tell you you are likely to have a new master, in the person of the young gentleman who pretends to be my cousin, and calls himself Herbert Lorimer. My dad declared yesterday, before a large assemblage, that he meant to place him in the establishment."

"Lord bless us! this is startling news indeed!"

"But it mustn't be, Bow Bells. Make it your business to dissuade Sir Gresham from so foolish a step. He'll listen to you."

"Oh, sir, I couldn't venture to oppose my opinion to my master's. No doubt he has excellent reasons for this determination. Mr. Herbert Lorimer——"

"— shan't have a share in the concern, if I can prevent it. I'd sooner take the place myself."

"Ah, that would be something like, sir. There I would support you," cried Crutchet, brightening up.

"Nay, I was but jesting. Business would never

suit me, Bow Bells; I'm not made for it. No, I must amuse myself. I can't lead a dull, humdrum, plodding life. I have no interest in City affairs and City folk like Sir Gresham. I must mix with the beau-monde, haunt the coffee-houses and the theatres, excite myself with a race, or at the cock-pit, or the Groom-Porters', or seek an adventure at Ranelagh or the masquerades. I should have found the ball at Guildhall horridly tame last night but for my love affair with Alice Walworth—ha! ha!"

"Ah, sir, I don't see much chance of your settling down into a steady character," sighed Crutchet. "If you have no further commands for me, I'll take my leave."

"Stay, Bow Bells, I haven't half done with you yet. I can't get a wife unless I have money, and I can't become steady unless I have a wife."

"Then follow the advice which I ventured to give you at first, and apply to Sir Gresham."

"Have you seen my father, Crutchet?"

"No, sir, he hasn't sent for me. But he is sure to do so before he goes to the Mansion House."

"I tell you what I'll do, Bow Bells—I'll get my mother to break the matter to him. Push that table towards me; it has pen, ink, and paper upon it. I'll write her a few lines." And as Crutchet complied, he set to work, and the note being written, he rang a handbell which was set upon the table, and the summons was immediately answered by Tiplady. "Take this to her ladyship, Tip," he added, giving him the note. As soon as the valet was gone, he continued, "I hope this will do the trick, Bow Bells; but if it fails, we must have recourse to Shadrach."

"I hope it will never come to that!" exclaimed Crutchet, with a shudder.

III.

TWO NOTES.

WHILE the interview detailed in the foregoing chapter took place, the Lord Mayor was breakfasting in a lower room with the Lady Mayoress. His lordship was wrapped in a magnificent brocade dressing-gown, and looked little the worse for the fatigue he had gone through on the preceding day. Neither did his appetite seem impaired, for he had consumed the best part of a broiled fowl, and was helping himself to some potted meat, when his two elder daughters entered the room.

"Good morning to you both, my dears," he

said, as they each kissed his cheek. "Delighted to see you. But how is it you are out so early?"

"We came early in order to see you before you go to the Mansion House, papa," said Lady Dawes. "We have something to say to you."

"Well, sit down and take some chocolate."

Sir Gresham soon perceived, from the looks and whispers exchanged between the Lady Mayoress and her daughters, that an attack was about to be made upon him. Nor was it long in coming. The Lady Mayoress opened the fire thus:

"In spite of their fatigues of last night, dearest Livy and dearest Chloris have ventured out, in order to tell you, Sir Gresham, how dreadfully shocked they are by what occurred at Guildhall, when that pitiful old wretch, whom you persist in calling your brother, was brought before his Majesty."

"Yes, papa," interrupted Lady Dawes, "I really couldn't sleep for thinking of it. But for this disagreeable incident, everything would have gone off

most charmingly. What could induce you to acknowledge such a creature as I am told this wretched old man is?"

"It is perfectly unaccountable, papa," chimed in Mrs. Chatteris, "and wholly inconsistent with your usual good sense and discrimination. Why, you'll make yourself the laughing-stock of the City."

"And then to complete the measure of his folly, your papa must needs send the old wretch here!" cried the Lady Mayoress. "But I'll pack him about his business pretty quickly."

"Hardly so, I think, my dear," observed the Lord Mayor, continuing his breakfast unconcernedly, "when you learn it is my pleasure he should stay."

"I think mamma quite right, I must own," remarked Lady Dawes; "and certainly, if I were in her place, I wouldn't submit to such an intolerable nuisance as this old man must prove. You can't be surprised if she should proceed to extremities with him."

"Indeed but I shall—very much surprised," rejoined the Lord Mayor.

"Surely, papa, you won't distress us all, and disgrace the family, by bringing this miserable creature among us?" cried Mrs. Chatteris. "I would never have believed it of you! Now, do be persuaded by me," she added, in a coaxing tone. "Let me give the necessary directions for his dismissal to Tomline."

"Hear me, Chloris. By this time all the City knows that this unfortunate man is my brother, and were I to cast him off as you recommend, disgrace would not only attach to me, but to you all."

On this, a general sigh was heaved by the ladies.

"And pray what do you propose doing with your so-called nephew and niece, Sir Gresham?" inquired the Lady Mayoress, glancing at her daughters.

"My niece will remain here for the present," he

returned; "and as to my nephew, he will be placed in the shop to-day. Crutchet will take charge of him, and if the young man goes on well, he will fill the position Tradescant ought to occupy."

"That is your intention, Sir Gresham?" said the Lady Mayoress, bitterly.

"That is my intention, madam," he repeated. "Oblige me with another cup of chocolate. If you would have allowed your son to be placed under Crutchet's care it would have been all the better for him."

"And why should Tradescant trouble himself about business, Sir Gresham? With his prospects——"

"Ay, there it is," cried the Lord Mayor, sharply. "It is owing to your perpetually prating to the lad about 'his prospects,' and putting ridiculous notions into his head, that he has become the idle fop he is. You will be responsible, madam, for any ill that may befal him."

"La! Sir Gresham, you quite frighten me," she exclaimed.

At this moment Tomline entered the room with a note, which he presented to Mrs. Chatteris on a silver plate.

"From the captain, madam," he said. "He wished it to be delivered to you immediately."

"From my husband!" she exclaimed, taking the billet. "What can he want? Pray excuse me, papa."

Opening the letter, she read as follows:

"DEAREST CHLORIS,—I must have 1000*l.* to-day—to discharge a debt of honour. Wheedle your papa out of the money. Exert all your arts, for if you fail I am done for. I have just been to your room, but find you are gone to Cheapside in your chair. Mind, nothing less than a thousand will do, and I must have it to-day.

"Your perplexed

"TOM."

"What's the matter, my dear child?" cried the Lady Mayoress. "You seem agitated. Take some eau-de-luce," handing her a flacon. "No bad news, I hope?"

"Not very good," replied Mrs. Chatteris, with an hysterical sob. "Dearest, dearest papa!" she exclaimed, rushing towards Sir Gresham, "I'm sure you will save him."

"Save him! Save whom?" cried the Lord Mayor, laying down his knife and fork, and staring at her.

"My husband — your son-in-law — Tom Chatteris. Save him from ruin—utter ruin!"

"Whew! Is it come to this?" cried the Lord Mayor. "Why, I paid his debts only a few months ago, and he then solemnly protested he would never get into the like scrape again."

"But this is a debt of honour, papa!"

"So much the worse. These so-called debts of honour are the most dishonourable debts a man can

incur. An honest creditor is put off without hesitation, but a knavish gamester must be paid, because, forsooth, his is a debt of honour. What does your husband want, madam?"

"I'm almost afraid to tell you, papa. He'll never trouble you again. He won't, indeed! He wants—that is, he hopes you'll let him have—a thousand pounds."

"A thousand devils!" exclaimed the Lord Mayor. "He shan't have it."

"Oh, don't say so, dearest papa! You wouldn't see us ruined. Join your entreaties to mine, dearest mamma!"

"It will be in vain," rejoined Sir Gresham. "I won't listen to either of you. Captain Chatteris deserves to pay for his folly, and he *shall* pay for it."

Here Tiplady entered the room, and presented a note to the Lady Mayoress.

"From my master, your ladyship," said the valet.

"Oh, lud! my heart misgives me!" cried the Lady Mayoress, taking the letter.

"Why does your master write, puppy?—why not come here, if he has anything to say?" demanded the Lord Mayor.

"His honour is not yet up, my lord," replied Tiplady. "He wrote the note in bed, and desired it might be given instantly to her ladyship." And, with an affected bow, he withdrew.

"I'll warrant it's to the same tune as t'other," muttered Sir Gresham, noticing his wife's changing countenance as she perused the billet.

It was to this effect:

"If you have any love for me, mother, you will save me from dishonour and despair. I have been frightfully unlucky of late, and have lost more than I dare confess; but help me out of my present scrape, and I will abjure cards and dice in future. I will, upon my soul. Coax my father out of 5000*l.* It's not all I want, but it will help me

through the day. If you find him amiably disposed, ask for 10,000*l.* I depend upon your getting the first-mentioned sum. Crutchet is now with me. He won't let me have a farthing more. Tom Chatteris is desperately hard up, and means to ask for money to-day, so it will be well to be beforehand with him.

"Your affectionate Son,

"TRADESCANT."

"What's the matter?" demanded the Lord Mayor. "Nothing wrong, I hope?"

"Oh no—nothing wrong," she replied; "that is—there's no use concealing it—the fact is, Tradescant wants money, Sir Gresham."

"I knew that was the burthen of his song," he replied. "Nothing less urgent would have caused him to write."

"Then I hope you have made up your mind to grant his request?"

"Hum! I can't say. How much does he want?"

"Well, Sir Gresham, he has been rather imprudent — but young men, you know, will be young men—he wants—but pray don't look so cross, or I shall never be able to tell you."

"Give me the letter, and let me see?"

"No, I can't do that. Since it must out, he wants ten—that is, five thousand pounds—and I hope you'll let him have it, Sir Gresham."

"Five thousand pounds!—why, it's a fortune!" cried the Lord Mayor, starting to his feet. "How can he have squandered away such a sum? He has been gaming—betting, dicing—but I'll know the truth."

"I won't attempt to defend him, Sir Gresham. Overlook his faults this once. He won't err again."

"I have overlooked his faults too often, madam," rejoined the Lord Mayor, sternly. "But a stop must now be put to his folly and extravagance. You are to blame for it."

"Oh! blame me as much as you please, Sir

Gresham. I will bear all your reproaches without a murmur—but do let Tradescant have the money. I'll answer for his good conduct in future."

"And don't forget poor dear Tom, papa?" implored Mrs. Chatteris. "He'll be ruined if you don't help him."

"*I* shall be ruined if I have to answer such demands as these upon me!" exclaimed the Lord Mayor. "Why, you ask me for six thousand pounds as if it was nothing. I can't do it, and WON'T. If these spendthrifts will go headlong to ruin, I can't help it. They must reap the fruit of their folly, and go to gaol."

"What! the Lord Mayor's son and son-in-law go to gaol!" exclaimed the Lady Mayoress, lifting up her hands. "You can't be serious, Sir Gresham."

"Zounds! this is enough to make me serious," he replied. "A pleasant commencement this to my mayoralty, truly! Just when I want to settle my spirits and get into a proper frame of mind for

business, I must be ruffled in this manner. Do you know what I have to do, madam? I'll tell you. First of all, I'm going to the Mansion House, where I shall be engaged till twelve in giving audiences, to I know not how many applications. Then I shall enter the justice-room, and shan't leave it till four o'clock. Then I dine at Merchant Tailors' Hall. This is what I have to do to-day, madam. I can't do it unless my mind is tranquil."

"Then pray tranquillise your mind, and tranquillise ours at the same time, Sir Gresham!" cried the Lady Mayoress.

"That is easily said, madam. But not so easily done. Large as are the sums you ask for, I would pay them without hesitation if I felt the slightest security that they would be the last required. But I have no such belief. On the contrary, were I to accede to this request, it would be followed by yet heavier demands. All Captain Chatteris's promises of amendment have been broken."

"But indeed, papa, he will reform," cried Mrs. Chatteris.

"And Tradescant is just as little to be relied on."

"You can't tell that, Sir Gresham," cried the Lady Mayoress. "At least, give him a trial."

"I *have* tried him, and found him wanting. The thing must come to a stop. As well now, as later."

"Oh dear, Sir Gresham!" exclaimed the Lady Mayoress, applying her handkerchief to her eyes. "How contradictory you are! You are liberal to all the world except your own family."

"My poor dear Tom will be ruined—and then what will become of me?" cried Mrs. Chatteris, sobbing like her mother.

"Well, I can't stand this any longer," said the Lord Mayor. "You'll drive me distracted. I'll go to Tradescant at once, and give him a little of my mind." And he dashed out of the room.

IV.

IN WHICH PRUE DEFENDS TRADESCANT.

ABOUT the same time, in a room in the upper part of the house, formerly used as a nursery, Millicent and Prue were seated at breakfast, talking over the various occurrences of the ball on the previous night, and while they were thus engaged, Herbert entered the room, habited in the plain attire in which he first appeared before his uncle.

"I am glad to see you looking so well, cousin Millicent," he said, saluting her and his sister. "I feared you might suffer—as I confess I do—from last night's dissipation. But it was a magnificent

sight, and we must all rejoice we had an opportunity of witnessing it."

"Indeed it was!" exclaimed Prue; "and only think of Milly being so much noticed by their Majesties!"

"The King was, indeed, very gracious," replied Milly, "and gave me some advice by which I shall strive to profit. And the Queen was charming. What a delightful smile she has! But we saw very little of you, Herbert. I ought to scold you for not asking me to dance; but I suppose you found so many agreeable partners that you never thought of me."

"He is dreadfully ungallant, I must say," observed Prue; "but I trust he has some good excuse to make for his conduct."

"I had but one partner, and she was lost in a very extraordinary manner," replied Herbert.

And he proceeded to recount the mysterious disappearance of Alice Walworth.

"Mercy on us!—how strange! What can have

happened to her?" exclaimed Millicent. "Have you made any inquiries this morning?"

"Not yet," he replied. "But I want to speak to you on another subject, Milly. I hope you believe how grateful Prue and myself feel for my good uncle's and your kindness to us. So deeply sensible am I of it, that I do not intend to notice certain very galling remarks made to me at the ball last night by your brother, and I trust the altercation may proceed no further. My position here, however, might be made so painful, that I could not remain——"

"I trust this may not be so, Herbert," interrupted Milly. "It would distress papa very much, and me too, if you and Prue were to leave us. You mustn't mind what Tradescant says. He is very hasty, but has a good heart."

"I'm very glad to hear you say so, Milly," he rejoined, "for then I shall have some hopes of succeeding in a scheme I have formed. I will venture to speak to you, because I know you must

entertain the same feelings as myself in the matter, and will be able to advise me. If I pain you, therefore, in what I am about to say, forgive me, and attribute it to the right motive. Your brother is in a very perilous position."

"You alarm me very much, Herbert," replied Milly, looking anxiously and inquiringly at him.

"I trust you are mistaken, brother," said Prue, who had become deathly pale. "What is the nature of Tradescant's peril? Relieve our anxiety, I beg of you."

"I grieve to say he has got into the hands of sharpers," replied her brother, "and can only be saved from certain ruin by prompt and direct interference."

"Then why don't you interfere promptly and directly?" cried his sister. "If the persons into whose hands he has got are really sharpers and cheats, why don't you expose them? *I* would do so, were I you."

"Upon my word, you display a vast deal of

spirit, Prue," replied Herbert, "and Tradescant has found a warm advocate in you."

"I have more faith in him than you appear to have," she replied, slightly blushing. "I can never believe that one endowed with such noble qualities as my cousin, can be so weak and unprincipled as you represent him. He may be a victim to the resistless passion of gaming, but ere long, I am persuaded, he will recover his judgment, and become ashamed of his follies."

"I wish you could accomplish his reform, Prue," observed Milly. "That would be doing him, and all of us, incalculable service."

"I will do my best, if I have the opportunity," rejoined Prue, blushing.

"Before you proceed further, Herbert," said Milly, "I would recommend you to take counsel of papa's manager, Mr. Crutchet. He knows Tradescant's affairs better than any one else, and will be able to advise you. You will find him in the counting-house."

"I will go to him at once," replied Herbert.

And he left the room.

"Oh, Milly!" exclaimed Prue, as they were left alone together, "this is a sad state of things. But I do not despair of Tradescant's reform. Perhaps its accomplishment may be reserved for me."

"If you *should* accomplish it, you'll deserve—I won't say what," rejoined Milly.

V.

WHAT PASSED BETWEEN THE LORD MAYOR AND HIS SON.

PROCEEDING to his son's room, the Lord Mayor threw open the door without allowing Tiplady to announce him. Crutchet was still there, and immediately arose on Sir Gresham's appearance.

"Good morning, sir," cried Tradescant, forcing a laugh. "I didn't expect this early visit, or I would have been prepared for you. Ten thousand pardons. Let me call Tip, and I'll be ready for you in a twinkling."

And, without waiting for his father's consent, he rang the bell violently, and the summons being

instantly answered by the valet, he ordered him to draw the screen before the bed, and, springing out as soon as this was done, proceeded with Tiplady's aid to attire himself with all possible despatch. Meanwhile, the Lord Mayor, who could scarcely control his anger, continued to pace to and fro within the room, occasionally kicking some obstruction out of the way, and casting an angry glance at Crutchet, who looked beseechingly at him. At length, having completed his toilette, Tradescant stepped from behind the screen, and tried to put on an easy air.

"Once more, good morning, respected sir," he said.

"Leave the room, puppy," said the Lord Mayor to Tiplady. And as soon as the valet was gone, and the door closed, he continued:

"You must have plenty of effrontery to be able to look me in the face, sirrah, after what I have just heard from your mother. So you have been gambling, eh? Harkye, Tradescant, if there

is one fashionable vice that I abhor and dread more than another, it is gaming. And that a son of mine should be a slave to such a vile passion, gives me inexpressible pain."

"But, Sir Gresham, your son has just promised me——"

"Don't talk to me about his promises, Crutchet. A gamester's promises are never to be relied on. All sense of honour, all right feeling is lost, when once that fatal passion has taken possession of the breast. There is but one way of curing him, and that I shall not hesitate to adopt."

"And pray what may that be, sir?" inquired Tradescant.

"Leaving you to get out of your difficulties as you can."

"But, sir, consider, these are debts of honour."

"The very last debts I should be inclined to pay. Debts of honour! And to whom are they incurred?—a pack of cheats and sharpers. Possibly, they may be titled cheats and sharpers, but

they are just as great rogues as those of lower station. I'll pay none of them."

"What, sir, would you have me forfeit my position in society?"

"You deserve to forfeit it for your scandalous conduct. But you should have thought of this before. You have gone too far, sir. I know you would laugh at any counsel I gave you——"

"On my soul, sir, you wrong me. I see my fault, and will amend."

"I won't trust you, Tradescant. You are a gamester. Such a one is no longer his own master, but is slave to an evil spirit who tyrannises over him inexorably. But I'll try to exorcise the demon. You have got a plague-spot upon you, and actual cautery alone will cure it. You may wince during the operation, but if it proves effectual it matters not."

"Why, sir, I shall have nothing for it but the road. I must ride out to Hounslow and Bagshot and take a purse; and then you may have the

satisfaction of committing me to Newgate, trying me at the Old Bailey, and consigning me to Jack Ketch. How well it will read in the newspapers: 'The Lord Mayor's only son was turned off yesterday at Tyburn, and made a very fine ending.'"

"You won't drive him to such dire extremities, surely, Sir Gresham?" put in Crutchet.

"He may be hanged for aught I care," rejoined the Lord Mayor. "Harkye, Crutchet, I know your weakness for this young scapegrace. I forbid you to lend him money—peremptorily forbid you."

"When your lordship is a little calmer, perhaps you'll listen to reason," said Tradescant. "I take Mr. Crutchet to witness that just as you entered the room I was discussing my future plans with him. I had expressed a lively sense of my past follies, and a firm resolution to reform. As an earnest of my intention, I design, with your permission, to marry."

"Yes, my lord, to marry!" cried Crutchet. "And the young lady Mr. Tradescant has selected is one I feel certain your lordship will approve."

"Well, who is she?" demanded the Lord Mayor.

"The daughter of Mr. Walworth, the hosier, of St. Mary-axe," replied Tradescant; "a very charming young person, with the additional recommendation of a large fortune."

"I believe you have more regard for the young lady's fortune than for herself, sir," rejoined the Lord Mayor. "But what sudden whim is this? Why, you and Tom Chatteris turned away from the Walworths in my presence last night, and now you tell me you intend to marry Alice. Like all the young coxcombs of the day, you think you have only to ask to be accepted."

"I'm pretty certain I shan't encounter a refusal on Alice's part," rejoined Tradescant.

"You surprise me. I own I thought she favoured your cousin Herbert, as was not unnatural

after the very important service he rendered her and her mother yesterday."

"Whatever her feelings may have been towards Herbert at the commencement of the evening, sir, they were changed before the close."

"Well, that doesn't say much for her constancy. Such a volatile creature as you describe is likely enough to change again before noon."

"I flatter myself not, sir," rejoined Tradescant, with a self-complacent look. "But do you approve my choice? Do you consent?"

"If I withhold my consent, I will give you my reasons for doing so," replied the Lord Mayor. "In the first place, you know nothing of the girl, and cannot tell whether she would suit you, while your own description of her is far from being calculated to prepossess me in her favour. It is, evidently, mere caprice on your part, and probably the same on hers. A poor foundation this for an engagement for life. You must see more of her."

"But I can't afford to wait," cried his son. "The marriage must take place speedily, if at all."

"I understand," observed the Lord Mayor, coldly. "This young woman is to be sacrificed to pay your debts. Such an act, however unworthy, reflects no discredit on a modern fine gentleman. A broken fortune is thus easily repaired. But I will be no party to any such dishonourable scheme, sir. Neither will I allow this thoughtless girl to be duped. If this affair proceeds further, and Mr. Walworth confers with me upon it, I will hide nothing from him. I will give him the result of my own experience, for, unfortunately, I know what it is to have a daughter married to a gamester. I shall ever reproach myself that I yielded to your mother's entreaties, and consigned your sister Chloris to Captain Chatteris. When you can convince me that you have abandoned play, I may consent to your marriage; but not till then."

"But you shut every door against me, sir," re-

joined Tradescant, sullenly. "You will neither aid me, nor allow me to aid myself. How the deuce am I to get out of my difficulties?"

"That you must find out for yourself, sir, since you have been foolish enough to run into them," said his father.

"I ask your pardon, sir," said Crutchet, imploringly; "but I think, with all submission, that you are rather hard upon your son."

"I am determined to read him a lesson," rejoined the Lord Mayor. "He will thank me for it hereafter. I have now done, sir," he added, sternly, to Tradescant, "and leave you to your reflections. Come with me to my study, Crutchet. I have something to say to you before I go to the Mansion House."

"I come, my lord," replied the old man. But he lingered, as the Lord Mayor quitted the room.

"Oh, Mr. Tradescant!" he groaned, "that ever I should live to see this day. I never remember

Sir Gresham in such a way before. What will be the end of it?"

"Deuce knows!" rejoined the reckless young man, with a laugh. "He'll calm down by-and-by."

"I don't think so, Mr. Tradescant—I don't think so. It'll break my heart if anything happens to you."

"Poh! don't be discouraged, Bow Bells. I shall get through it without damage."

"Dear! dear! what wonderful spirits you have to be sure. You can stare ruin in the face without blinking."

"Ruin! Who's thinking of ruin? It's all very well for old dad to grumble and lecture, but he'll never let me go to the wall—not he! He makes a pretence of buttoning up his breeches-pockets tightly, but he'll be obliged to fork out pretty handsomely by-and-by. He deserves to smart for his obstinacy. Whether I like it or not, he forces

me to raise money. Nothing now but Shadrach and twenty per cent. You must go with me to the old usurer this afternoon, Bow Bells."

"It goes against my conscience, but I can't bear to see you harassed, Mr. Tradescant."

"You're right, Bow Bells. I am confoundedly harassed—improperly harassed, I may say."

"Well, well. I won't exactly promise to accompany you; but, if I do go, it'll only be to keep you out of harm. But I must follow your father. He'll think I'm plotting against him if I stay longer. How will it all end?"

And with the slow, vacillating footstep denoting a heavy heart, he quitted the room, casting a compassionate look at Tradescant ere he closed the door.

As soon as he was alone, the young man threw himself upon a sofa, and indulged in the following self-communion. "I was a fool to make my old dad acquainted with my embarrassments, but I fancied I was all safe with my mother. She seems

to have lost her influence over him. However, since he throws me on my own resources, he can't blame me for any steps I may take. And as to letting me go down for a paltry five thousand pounds, he won't do that. His own credit is at stake. The Lord Mayor of London must sustain his son—so I may make myself perfectly easy. The main point is to raise the money to-day. I must pay Wilkes and the others, and have my revenge from Gleek and Bragge. How cursedly spiteful old dad is in regard to my matrimonial project. But he shan't frustrate the scheme. Opposition only makes me determined to marry the girl. I'll have her—with or without old Walworth's consent. But I must proceed to make my toilette, for I've plenty to do to-day. Here, Tip," he added, as the valet appeared in answer to his bell, "send Le Gros to dress my peruke, and if Mr. Wilkes, or any other of my friends should call, show them up-stairs."

"What will your honour please to take for breakfast?" inquired Tiplady.

"A grilled chicken, an omelette aux fines herbes, and a bottle of Bordeaux," replied Tradescant. "En attendant, Tip, a thimbleful of usquebaugh to steady my nerves. They have been confoundedly shaken."

An hour or so elapsed, and during this interval Tradescant had completed his toilette to his entire satisfaction. His flaxen peruke had been dressed and carefully adjusted by Le Gros, and he was discussing the grilled chicken and claret, when Captain Chatteris burst into the room. The captain had just been informed by his wife of the ill-success of her application on his behalf to Sir Gresham, and he came to Tradescant to complain of the shabby treatment he had experienced, and to concert measures with him for obtaining a supply.

Tradescant told him he was in the same predicament himself, and recommended him to accom-

pany him to the Jew money-lender's, where possibly they might both be accommodated, and to this proposition Chatteris unhesitatingly assented. Tradescant then proceeded to acquaint his brother-in-law with his newly-fledged matrimonial scheme, at which the captain laughed heartily.

"I'll go with you to the City Mall at half-past four," he said, "to see how the affair comes off. But, meantime, we must look up Shadrach. It is highly important to take Old Bow Bells with us. The very sight of him will induce Shadrach to lend the money."

As soon as Tradescant had finished breakfast, the two young men went down stairs, and knocking at the door of communication between the house and the shop, were instantly admitted to the counting-house by Crutchet.

VI.

IN WHICH MR. CANDISH APPEARS IN A NEW CHARACTER.

On quitting Tradescant, Crutchet descended to the first floor, and proceeded to the Lord Mayor's study, which was situated at the end of the gallery, and looked towards the back of the house. It was small, plainly furnished, and contained a bookcase, a table provided with writing materials, and a few chairs. Over the chimney-piece was a portrait of the founder of the house, Mr. Tradescant, a handsome, portly man, attired in a dress of the early part of the century — square-cut

maroon-coloured coat, with gold-edged button-holes, flowered silk waistcoat, formally-curled peruke, and cravat fringed with lace. On entering the study, Crutchet found the Lord Mayor standing with his back to the fire, evidently expecting him with impatience.

"What! more last words with that graceless boy, Crutchet?" he cried.

"I know he has been very foolish, and I'm not surprised you are very angry with him, sir. Still, I wish you would view his conduct a little more leniently."

"I've made up my mind, Crutchet, and all your persuasions won't change me. Nothing, indeed, but your blind partiality would induce you to attempt his defence."

"I do dote upon him, Sir Gresham. When I consider whose son he is, and whose grandson," he added, glancing at the portrait over the fireplace, "I can't and won't despair of him."

"Well, I trust you may prove to be right, and I wrong, Crutchet. But I must once more caution you against lending him money."

"Your caution comes too late, my lord."

"Why, you stupid old dotard—you deserve—I don't know what. 'Sdeath! I never thought to be really angry with you, Crutchet, but I am now. How dared you lend my son money, sir, without consulting me? You have encouraged him in his profligate ways—undermined my authority—betrayed my confidence—deceived me, sir."

"How so, Sir Gresham? Surely I have a right to do what I please with my own?—to give my money to whom I choose—to throw it away, if I think proper!"

"You have no right to corrupt my son, sir. How much have you lent him? Tell me at once, that the debt may be discharged."

"I can't tell you, Sir Gresham. I have kept no memoranda."

"No memoranda! Impossible, sir. This is the

way I am to be treated. My commands set at naught——"

"I have never disobeyed you, Sir Gresham. I have been a faithful servant to you, as I was to my honoured master, Mr. Tradescant, and I can give a good account of my stewardship."

"Forgive me, my good friend," said the Lord Mayor, grasping his hand warmly. "I was too hasty."

"I know I have been to blame in this matter," replied Crutchet, much moved, "and can only say in excuse—that I couldn't help it."

"The young rascal knows his power over you, and abuses it. 'Tis well I am made of sterner stuff. However, though this concerns me much, it is not what I want to speak to you about. Have you any recollection of my brothers, especially of the elder of them, Lawrence?"

"To be sure I have, Sir Gresham. I knew them both when you lived in Bucklersbury. But they wanted your steadiness. Neither of them

would work. Lawrence was fond of plays, and Godfrey idled his time in the streets."

"Should you know Lawrence, think you, were you to see him again?"

"No doubt—but I fear I shan't behold him again in this world."

"Don't be too sure of that," replied Sir Gresham, ringing a bell. And he added to Tomline, who answered it, "Request Mr. Candish to come to me."

"If I am not misinformed, my lord, you had a visit yesterday from some relations you never saw before?" remarked Crutchet.

"True!—a nephew and niece, children of my poor brother Godfrey, who, it appears, died some years ago at York. I was going to tell you about them. My niece, Prue, is a very amiable, pretty young woman—all I could desire, in short—but her brother, Herbert, pleases me best—a fine, spirited young fellow. Would Tradescant were like him."

"I'm sure your son has spirit enough, my lord. Ah! you'll live to be proud of him yet."

"But with all his spirit, Herbert has no distaste to business—quite the contrary—so it's my intention to place him in my own concern, and, if he turns out well, to make him a partner. You must take him in hand, Crutchet. Fit him for the post."

"I'll do my best, my lord," returned the old man, with a sigh, feeling that Tradescant would be entirely superseded.

"Engrossed as my time will necessarily be by the important duties of my office," pursued the Lord Mayor, "I shan't be able to attend to my nephew, and must leave his instruction to you. You shall see him presently. But what keeps Mr. Candish? I thought he would have been here before this."

"Pray who is Mr. Candish, my lord?" asked Crutchet.

"You'll see," replied the Lord Mayor. "I'll

try whether he knows him," he added to himself.

With this he sat down at the table, with his back to the door, pretending to busy himself with some papers, leaving Crutchet standing near the fire.

Shortly afterwards the door was opened, and some one entered the room. Sir Gresham had no doubt it was Candish, but he did not turn round to look, wishing to ascertain what effect his brother's appearance would produce upon Crutchet.

In no way prepared for the new comer, Crutchet was not surprised, as he might have been, if he had heard a description of him. He beheld a little old man, dressed in a peach-coloured velvet coat very much faded, a tarnished laced waistcoat, and tawny velvet breeches just as much worn as the coat, pink silk stockings hanging loosely on his shrunken calves, and shoes with paste buckles. His costume was completed by a well-powdered wig with a high foretop, ailes de pigeon, and a

prodigiously long queue. A touch of rouge on the sunken cheeks, together with a couple of mouchets artistically placed, and a little darkening of the eyebrows, gave an entirely different expression to the old man's face. His dress, looks, and manner were those of a superannuated beau. He carried a three-cornered hat under his arm, and a cane in hand. On entering the room, he made a very ceremonious bow to Mr. Crutchet, who returned it, and said,

"His lordship is occupied for the moment, sir."

"Oh! don't disturb his lordship for the world," replied Candish, in accents totally unlike those of the day before, being high and affected—"I can wait. Allow me to offer you a pinch of snuff, sir."

"Eh day! what's this?" thought the Lord Mayor. "That doesn't sound like Lawrence's voice.—Give Mr. Candish a chair, Crutchet. I shall have done in a moment. Talk away. You won't disturb me."

"A thousand thanks, my good sir," said Candish, declining the chair. "Mr.——I didn't quite catch the name."

"Tobias Crutchet, at your service, sir."

"Do you recollect the name, Mr. Candish?" asked Sir Gresham, without looking up.

"Not in the least, my lord," replied the individual appealed to.

"Come here, Crutchet," cried the Lord Mayor; adding, in a low tone, as the other drew near, "Well, who is it?"

"I don't understand your lordship," replied Crutchet. "I've never seen the gentleman before."

"Look again! Observe him narrowly!"

"I'm quite at fault, my lord."

"Why, you're blind and stupid! Don't you recognise——ha!"

The latter exclamation was uttered as the Lord Mayor turned round and perceived the extraordinary transformation that had taken place in

Candish. So totally changed was he that Sir Gresham himself did not know him again.

"Zounds!" he exclaimed, "I can scarcely believe my eyes. Are you the individual I saw yesterday?"

"The identical person, my lord," replied the other, with a profound bow. "A good night's rest and a good breakfast have wonderfully improved me; while by your kindness, and the attention of your coiffeur, M. le Gros, I have been provided with these habiliments."

"Well, I was about to acquaint Mr. Crutchet with some circumstances connected with your history, but I shall now defer them to another opportunity. Mr. Candish is an old friend of mine—a very old friend, Crutchet, and I fancied he had been an acquaintance of yours. He will remain with me for the present—perhaps altogether —and I wish him to be treated like one of the family."

"He shall have nothing to complain of as far as

I am concerned," said Crutchet, greatly surprised.

"Your lordship is a great deal too good," cried Candish.

At this moment the door was again opened to admit Herbert.

"Good morrow, nephew!" cried the Lord Mayor. "Glad to see you. I have just been speaking of you to Mr. Crutchet—telling him that I design to place you in my establishment, and recommending you to his best attentions."

"Mr. Herbert Lorimer has only to command me," replied Crutchet, bowing to the young man. "He will find me in the counting-house whenever he wants me, and I shall always be at his service. Your lordship, I presume, does not require me further?" And, with a general bow to the company, he departed.

"Have you forgotten Mr. Candish, Herbert?" said the Lord Mayor.

"What! is this he? On my soul! I didn't

know him. Excuse me, uncle — you are so changed."

"Prithee, young gentleman, do not address me by that title again. I am no more your uncle than I am the Lord Mayor's brother."

"Well, let him have his way," rejoined Sir Gresham. "But notwithstanding his denial, it is my intention to treat him as a brother, and to unbosom myself to him, as well as to you, nephew. I grieve to say, then, that my son, Tradescant, has acquired a taste for play, which, if not checked, may lead to lamentable consequences."

"Your lordship, I fear, is hardly aware of the full extent of your son's danger," observed Herbert. "It is right you should know the worst, that you may guard against it. I heard enough last night to convince me that my cousin Tradescant is in the hands of sharpers."

"Sharpers! Then indeed he is lost!" exclaimed Sir Gresham. "Oh! my unhappy boy!"

"Why did you tell him this?" whispered Candish.

"I did it for the best," replied Herbert. "But I fear I was too abrupt."

"I thank you for your sincerity, Herbert," said Sir Gresham, recovering himself. "It is best to know the truth, however painful it may be. But oh! to think he should have come to this!"

"Who are the sharpers with whom Tradescant has been playing?—are they notorious cheats?" demanded Candish.

"It would seem so from what I heard. They are named Gleek and Bragge."

"Two arrant knaves as any that infest the gaming-tables, and as little likely to abandon their prey as any of their rapacious tribe," rejoined Candish. "Nevertheless, my lord, I do not despair of rescuing your son from them. But I must have a little money for the purpose. My pockets, I need scarcely say, are quite empty."

"Take what you please," cried Sir Gresham,

producing a pocket-book, and offering him notes —"a hundred—two hundred——"

"A hundred will suffice for the present," rejoined Candish. "If I want more I will ask for it."

"Can I be of use in the plan?" said Herbert.

"I count upon you," rejoined Candish. "If possible, my lord, I will extricate your son from the peril in which he is involved, and without making the affair a public scandal, which, for his sake, and for your sake, too, ought to be avoided."

"It *must* be avoided—at any sacrifice on my part. There must be no public scandal. I should never hold up my head again, if such a disgraceful affair as this should take wind."

"Have no fear, my lord. It shall not do so," rejoined Candish.

"Let me give you both a caution," said Sir Gresham. "Whatever your plan may be, do not confide it to Mr. Crutchet, or the object may be defeated. Though one of the trustiest persons

breathing, he cannot keep a secret from Tradescant. You must therefore be upon your guard with him."

"It was well your lordship cautioned me, for I was about to consult him on the subject," observed Herbert.

At this moment Tomline entered to say that his lordship's chariot was waiting to take him to the Mansion House.

"I'll come directly," replied Sir Gresham.

"You must excuse me, Lawrence," he added, as soon as the man was gone; "and as I may not see you again until late in the day, let me beg of you to make yourself perfectly at home here. Consider this room as your own. Order what you please, and do what you please. I will give directions to the servants to attend to you. It will be your own fault if you are not comfortable. As to you, Herbert, Mr. Crutchet will be glad to see you in the counting-house." And with a kindly look at both he quitted the room.

Proceeding to his dressing-room to make some needful change in his attire, he then entered his chariot, and drove to the Mansion House.

Acting on his uncle's suggestion, Herbert went down to the counting-house, and while employed there made a discovery, which he thought it necessary to impart without delay to Candish.

VII.

THE LOWER WALKS IN MOORFIELDS.

A LONG discussion had taken place in the counting-house between Crutchet, Chatteris, and Tradescant, and this discussion Herbert overheard. As Crutchet positively refused to enter Shadrach's dwelling, it became necessary to make an appointment with the money-lender elsewhere. Accordingly, a note was despatched by Tradescant to Green Dragon-court, Old Jewry, where Shadrach dwelt, desiring him to be at a particular part of the Lower Walks in Moorfields at four o'clock, to meet some gentlemen, who would not care to be seen at

his house. The hour and place were fixed to suit Tradescant's engagement with the Walworths in the City Mall. Half an hour would suffice for the transaction with the Jew. An answer was brought back by the porter to the effect that Mr. Shadrach would not fail to attend to the appointment. It may be proper to mention that a handsome fee to the messenger had procured the wily Jew full information as to whom the note came from. It was then agreed between Crutchet and the others that they should find their way separately to Moorfields, and meet, as if casually, at the place of rendezvous.

Accustomed to dine at an eating-house at two o'clock, Crutchet did not return to Cheapside after his meal, but, the afternoon being fine, proceeded along Coleman-street, in the direction of Moorgate, unconscious that he was followed by an elderly individual wrapped in a roquelaure, who had dined at the same eating-house as himself, and had quitted it the moment after him. Contrary to his

custom, which was to walk briskly, Crutchet proceeded very leisurely. The Cambridge coach first attracted his attention; then some waggons drawn up near the Bell Inn; and lastly, Moorgate itself; for though he had pressed through the gateway many a hundred times before without bestowing much regard upon it, he now paused to contemplate it with a melancholy kind of interest.

This gate, which could not boast much antiquity, having only been erected some eighty or ninety years previously on the site of a much older structure, was accounted the most magnificent in the City, and consisted of a lofty arch, which could be closed if required, with a postern on either side of it. The upper part of the fabric, comprising two stories, and forming a commodious dwelling-house, was ornamented with Corinthian pilasters, above which was a round pediment displaying the City arms. The arch was unusually lofty, being so built, it was said, to enable the train-bands to carry their pikes erect while march-

ing through it. The rooms over the gateway were assigned to Mr. Towse, the Lord Mayor's chief carver. Though the edifice was in very good preservation, and justly admired for its beauty, it was found inconvenient, owing to the increasing traffic in that part of the City, and its removal had been decided upon. Aware it was doomed, Crutchet, who had known it ever since he was a boy, now contemplated it with regret. At last he moved on, passed through the right-hand postern, and found himself in Moorfields.

This extensive piece of ground, which would now-a-days be termed a "park," was very charmingly laid out in four large grass-plots, or "quarters," as they were called, intersected by broad gravel-walks, and was much frequented by the citizens for purposes of exercise and recreation. The mid walk, which was of considerable length, with a row of well-grown elm-trees on either side, and seats for the convenience of promenaders, was designated—owing to its being the resort of all

the persons of fashion to be met with at the eastern end of the metropolis — the City Mall. And if the smartness of the company who frequented it was to count for anything, it might be fairly said to rival the Mall in St. James's Park. On Sundays and holidays the City Mall was thronged; but even on ordinary occasions it was greatly frequented, and exhibited much more variety of character than could be found at the West-end. Here might be seen the citizens' wives and daughters flaunting in all their finery, and displaying their charms to the Moorfields maccaronis, whose hats were cocked diagonally over the right or left eye, and who gave themselves quite as many airs as the coxcombs of St. James's. But the City Mall was really very lively and amusing, and had something of a continental air. Booths and small shops, where fans, toys, trinkets, confectionary, and other light matters, could be purchased, were arranged under the trees, and there was generally some show or mountebank

diversion to be witnessed on the "quarters." The central walk could be lighted up at dusk by lamps swung from ropes attached to the trees on either side. A grand termination to the vista on the south was offered by Bethlehem Hospital, which, with its noble façade upwards of five hundred feet in length, its three pavilions, high roof, and handsome stone balustrades, looked like a palace, and indeed had been built on the model of the Tuileries, to the infinite annoyance of Louis XIV.

Taking his way along the high wall, built of brick and stone, which enclosed the spacious gardens laid out for the recreation of the unfortunate inmates of the asylum, Crutchet walked on until he came to a grand semicircular sweep, in the centre of which was a pair of magnificent iron gates, forming the principal entrance to the hospital. On the piers to which these gates were hung were placed the two life-like statues, representing raving madness and melancholy madness,

executed by the elder Cibber, and alluded to in the Dunciad:

> Where, o'er the gates, by his famed father's hand,
> Great Cibber's brazen, brainless brothers stand.

Having spent a few minutes in surveying this stately edifice and its gardens, Crutchet turned in the opposite direction, and looked down the City Mall. The promenade was now thronged by gaily-dressed folk, but being in no mood to join them, Crutchet kept close by the hospital wall until he reached the east side of Moorfields, where there was a long range of stalls belonging to second-hand booksellers, and dealers in second-hand goods of all sorts. While he was examining the volumes on one of these stalls, the individual who had followed him so pertinaciously came up, and employed himself in a similar manner. A quarter of an hour passed in this way, when glancing at the large clock placed in the central pavilion of the hospital, and finding it only wanted a few minutes to four, Crutchet proceeded to the place of rendezvous,

and, just as he reached it, Tradescant, looking the very pink of fashion, got out of a sedan-chair, and joined him. In another moment Captain Chatteris made his appearance from another chair, and shortly afterwards a little old man, dressed in black, and wearing a dark hair-cap, surmounted by a large three-cornered hat, and having unmistakably Jewish features, approached them. This was Shadrach, the money-lender. After the needful introductions had taken place, the whole party left the walk, and repaired to an unoccupied bench near a large tree on the west side of the "quarter." They had not long seated themselves on this bench, when the person who had been watching Crutchet came cautiously up, and planted himself on the other side of the tree, the trunk of which was quite large enough to screen him from observation.

"Well, Shadrach," commenced Captain Chatteris, "you can guess what we want with you."

"Yes, yes, I understand, captain," replied the Jew; "but you couldn't have come to me at a

worse time. Money's very scarce—the market's exceedingly tight, as Mr. Crutchet will tell you. However, I'm always happy to accommodate my friends, if I can. How much do you want, captain?"

"Only a thousand pounds," replied Chatteris.

"Only a thousand, eh! A mere trifle! why, I shall have to borrow it myself at fifty per cent., so I must charge you seventy-five, my dear."

"Seventy-five per cent.!" exclaimed Crutchet. "Have you no conscience, Mr. Shadrach?"

"Consider the scarcity of money and the risk I run, Mr. Crutchet," replied the Jew. "But I must have good security, captain.—What can I do for you, sir?" he added, turning to Tradescant.

"I want a much larger sum than Captain Chatteris," replied the other. "Nothing short of five thousand pounds will serve my turn."

"Bless my soul! that *is* a large sum. I haven't

got half the amount, and how am I to procure the remainder?"

"That you know best, Shadrach. But I want it without delay."

"But it's not to be got in an instant, my dear; and if I lend you the whole sum, I can't oblige the captain."

"Well, never mind me," observed Chatteris. "Give Mr. Lorimer the preference."

"But I can't do it for seventy-five per cent. I must have a hundred."

"Well, well—a hundred be it," rejoined Trades cant. "Only let me have the money speedily."

"Hold, sir!" exclaimed Crutchet. "You mustn't yield to such infamous extortion."

"As Mr. Lorimer pleases," rejoined Shadrach, with affected indifference. "I shall make no abatement. I can't afford to do it under."

"I agree, I tell you," observed Tradescant.

"But five thousand is a serious sum, sir," and if I lend it I must have good security. I have every

reliance upon you as the Lord Mayor's son, but the debt may be disputed. You must give me your bond, my dear, and Mr. Crutchet must join you in it. Without this, I won't do it."

"Well, there will be no difficulty in that, Shadrach. You are willing to join in the bond, eh, Crutchet?"

"I don't like it, and I'm sure you'll repent the transaction, sir."

"Nonsense! — the matter may be considered settled, Shadrach. But I must have the money to-day."

"Well, if you can manage to be at Moss and Levy's offices in the Barbican, at seven o'clock this evening, you may, perhaps, be accommodated."

"This is a bad business, sir," groaned Crutchet, "and I wish I could dissuade you from going on with it."

"Have done with this croaking," cried Tradescant, rising from the seat. "We will be with you

at Moss and Levy's punctually at seven, Shadrach."

"Mr. Crutchet must come with you, my dear," said the Jew.

"Oh yes, I'll bring him," replied Tradescant.

"Have you done with me now, sir?" inquired Crutchet. And receiving an answer in the affirmative, he bowed stiffly to Shadrach, and quitting Moorfields, hastened back to Cheapside. Tradescant and Chatteris remained for a few moments talking to the Jew, and then proceeded towards the Mall, very well satisfied with the result of the negotiation.

Shadrach remained where he was, watching them, with his arms folded upon his breast, and a contemptuous grin playing upon his sallow countenance. All at once, a slight noise aroused him, and he perceived an old gentleman, wearing a roquelaure, standing on his right.

"Your servant, Mr. Shadrach," said this personage, bowing politely.

"Sir, your humble," replied the money-lender, raising his hat.

"Don't let me disturb you, sir, I beg," said the stranger. "I'll take a seat beside you. Will a pinch of snuff be agreeable?" offering him a box. "You sometimes lend money, I believe, Mr. Shadrach?"

"Sometimes," replied the Jew, wondering whether the old gentleman wanted to borrow; "but only on good security, sir."

"Oh! that's understood," rejoined the other. "Large interest and no risk; that's your maxim—eh, Mr. Shadrach?"

"Not exactly my maxim, sir. But it's not a bad one—ha! ha!"

"You may be surprised at the interest I take in you, Mr. Shadrach, but you'll find out my motive presently. Excuse me for putting the question, but I hope you're not going to lend money to the two sparks who have just left you?"

"I must decline to answer that question, sir."

"As you please. My desire is to serve you. I should be sorry you lost your money."

"Lose my money!" echoed the Jew, tapping his nose. "There ain't much chance of my doing that, Mr. What's-your-name."

"Candish is my name, Mr. Shadrach. I've given you a friendly hint. You'll do well not to neglect it."

"And pray, Mr. Candish, do you know the two young gentlemen whose credit you're trying to shake?"

"Perfectly well, sir. One is the Lord Mayor's son, Mr. Tradescant Lorimer: the other, the Lord Mayor's son-in-law, Captain Chatteris. Both extravagant, both in debt, and consequently both obliged to have recourse to you."

"Well, sir, your description, I own, is tolerably accurate; but I see nothing very alarming in it. If they can't pay, some one else can; and that's all one to me."

"Perhaps you calculate upon the Lord Mayor,

Mr. Shadrach? You think he will come down, eh? If so, allow me to set you right. His lordship won't pay one farthing. Nay, more, he'll take every possible means of punishing you. The prodigality and vices of these young men have exasperated him beyond endurance, and be the consequences what they may, he is resolved to make them feel the effects of their folly. I will confess that I played the eavesdropper just now, and overheard your bargain with the young prodigals. But I am persuaded, when you consider the risk you will inevitably run, coupled with the certainty of obtaining merely lawful interest—if that—you will hesitate in carrying it out."

"Oh no, sir, I shan't. Your arguments are very plausible, but they don't weigh with me. I'm content to run all risks. Besides, I've a better opinion of the Lord Mayor than you have, Mr. Candish. He's not half so bad as you represent him. He won't let his son go to the wall, or his son-in-law either. No—no; I know better than that. But

even if his lordship should disappoint me, I shall have Mr. Crutchet to look to, so I shall be quite safe."

"You're wrong, Shadrach. You'll get into trouble, and lose your money into the bargain."

"I must take my chance," replied the Jew, curtly. "I wish you a very good morning, Mr. Candish. My respectful compliments to the Lord Mayor." And, with a cunning leer, he bowed and departed.

"The crafty old rascal won't take fright," muttered Candish. "The profit is too great. What's to be done? Crutchet mustn't go to Moss and Levy's. But how to prevent him?—I'll turn it over as I go along."

Thus ruminating, he shaped his course slowly towards Moorgate.

When Tradescant and Captain Chatteris gained the Mall, it was exceedingly crowded, and by rather a miscellaneous set—wealthy-looking merchants and bankers, sharp stockbrokers, tradesmen

of every variety, apprentices, ladies, City beaux, City militiamen, footmen, nursemaids, and children. Through this concourse our young sparks made their way, but for some time they could discern nothing of the Walworths. At last, as they had got nearly to the farther end of the Mall, where it was less crowded, they perceived the objects of their quest. There undoubtedly were Alice and her mother; the young lady in an adorable rose-coloured satin sacque and fly-cap, and the elder in a sky-blue silk négligé and Ranelagh mob. Both wore a good deal of lace, and carried fans. Behind them strutted a little African page, leading a snowy French barbette by a ribbon. This sable attendant, whose hideous face glistened like polished ebony, and who answered to the name of Pompey, was attired in a semi-Oriental garb, his head being crowned by a muslin turban, with a few parti-coloured feathers stuck in it. The ladies were escorted by Mr. Walworth and Sir Felix Bland.

In another moment the parties met, and all the customary greetings were gone through. Alice blushed on beholding Tradescant, cast down her eyes, and then raised them again to allow them to dwell fondly upon him. It was quite evident, from the manner in which young Lorimer was welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. Walworth, that he had only to ask and have; but not to leave him in any doubt on the subject, the ever-obliging Sir Felix Bland contrived to whisper in his ear, while shaking hands with him,

"It's all right, my dear boy. They're both mightily pleased with you—the mother especially so. Old Walworth means to come down handsomely, so the sooner you talk to him the better."

Acting upon this friendly hint, Tradescant, after a little tender discourse with Alice, begged a word with her father, and allowing the others to pass on a little in advance, at once opened the matter, and, with a preliminary flourish descriptive of the violent passion he had conceived for Alice — a

passion which he declared he had every reason to believe was shared by the young lady herself—he concluded by asking the old hosier's consent.

"Well, Mr. Lorimer," old Walworth replied, "I won't pretend to deny that this proposal is agreeable to me, and that I shall be very glad indeed to have you for a son-in-law, and very proud to be connected with your worthy father, the Lord Mayor, but, before we go any further, let me inquire whether you have asked his lordship's consent?"

"I have not thought it necessary as yet, sir, because I feel certain he will at once accord it," replied Tradescant. "When he finds my affections are fixed on so charming a person as Miss Walworth, he will offer no bar to my happiness."

"I trust it may be so, sir. To-morrow I shall wait upon him, and state my intentions in regard to my daughter. You shall have no reason to complain of me, Mr. Lorimer. You won't take a beggar to your arms, sir."

"Oh! sir, you are too good. But Alice would be wealthy with no other dowry than her beauty."

At this moment, Sir Felix Bland, who had been casting an occasional backward glance towards them, received a look from Tradescant which caused him to loiter till they came up.

"Well, my dear Mr. Walworth," said the little alderman, "I hope I may congratulate my young friend. All is settled, eh?"

"All is settled, so far as my consent is concerned, Sir Felix. But Sir Gresham has to be consulted."

"No opposition, I fancy, need be apprehended in that quarter, my dear Mr. Walworth," replied Sir Felix. "I may venture, I think, to answer for my friend the Lord Mayor."

"That's very well, Sir Felix. But no positive engagement can be made till his lordship's sanction is obtained. May I ask you to accompany me to him to-morrow?"

"Anything I can do to serve you, my dear Mr.

Walworth, you may command. But this will be a positive pleasure."

"Sir, you are extremely obliging. I'm a plain man, Sir Felix, but I've saved a little money——"

"I know it, sir. We are all aware that Mr. Walworth is rich—immensely rich——"

"No, not immensely rich—well off. I don't like to boast, Sir Felix, but I can give my daughter a plum, and I mean to give it her if I am satisfied."

"Upon my word, my dear Mr. Walworth, you are exceedingly generous, and surpass the expectations I had formed of you. D'ye hear that?" he whispered to Tradescant. "A plum! You're a lucky dog."

"I've the highest opinion of the Lord Mayor," pursued Walworth, "and I shall esteem it an honour to be connected with him."

"Cheap at a hundred thousand pounds—cheap, I should say, my dear Mr. Walworth."

"In confiding my daughter to the son of Sir

Gresham Lorimer, I feel secure. The father is a guarantee for the son's good conduct."

"Very true, my dear sir—the father is a guarantee," replied Sir Felix, nodding.

"Some young men of the present day are sad rakes and gamblers. Now, such a son-in-law wouldn't suit me at all."

"What the deuce is he driving at?" muttered Tradescant to Sir Felix. "I hope he doesn't suspect me."

"I approve of your caution, my dear Mr. Walworth," said the little alderman. "But Mr. Lorimer inherits all his father's good qualities—an excellent young man, sir."

"You will have no reason to regret bestowing your daughter upon me, Mr. Walworth," said Tradescant.

"That Mr. Walworth feels, my dear young friend. Sir Gresham's consent has only to be obtained, and the wedding-day may be fixed as soon as you please, eh, Mr. Walworth?"

"Just so, Sir Felix," replied the old hosier. "This being understood, Mr. Lorimer, you can join my daughter, who, I make no doubt, thinks I have detained you long enough."

"When my obstinate old dad learns she is to have a plum, he won't refuse his consent," thought Tradescant, as he returned to Alice.

So elated was he by the notion of the large fortune he was likely to obtain, he had now no difficulty in playing the ardent lover. They had taken a few turns in the Mall, when they met Lady Dawes and Mrs. Chatteris, attended by Wilkes and Tom Potter, and followed by a couple of laced and powdered footmen. Fearing his sisters might say or do something to mar his project, Tradescant got Captain Chatteris to explain matters to them, on which they became all smiles and civility to the Walworths, and professed to be charmed with Alice. Wilkes and Tom Potter, as may be supposed, did not fail to rally their friend on the expedition he had shown in running

his head into a noose, and Tradescant was on thorns lest some of their jests should reach the ear of his future father-in-law. However, all went on pretty smoothly, and the whole party were moving along the Mall, laughing and chatting gaily, when they perceived Herbert coming towards them. The appearance of the young man at this juncture was agreeable neither to the Walworths nor to Tradescant, but Wilkes was secretly delighted, inasmuch as he anticipated amusement.

"Ha! here comes your cousin Lorimer," he cried.

"I must beg you not to apply that term to him again," cried Tradescant. "I disclaim all relationship with him."

"So do we all," exclaimed Lady Dawes and Mrs. Chatteris together.

"Oblige me by not noticing the young man, Alice," said Tradescant. "He is personally disagreeable to me."

"Since you desire it, certainly," she replied; "but he will think me shockingly ungrateful."

"Never mind what he thinks. Look another way."

By this time Herbert had come up, and, bowing to the party, was about to address himself to the Walworths, but, struck by the altered manner of Alice and her mother, and repelled by the haughty looks of Tradescant, and the disdainful glances of Lady Dawes and Mrs. Chatteris, he drew aside, and the party, with the exception of Wilkes, Sir Felix Bland, and Mr. Walworth, passed on. Pained that the young man should be thus treated, Mr. Walworth stammered out some apologies, but they were very coldly received.

"I have just called at your house in St. Mary-axe, Mr. Walworth," said Herbert, in a sarcastic tone, "to inquire after your daughter, and was glad to learn that she was brought back safely last night."

"Safe and sound, sir," rejoined the old hosier. "All's well that ends well, Mr. Herbert."

"You did me the honour to make me account-

able for Miss Walworth, Mr. Herbert Lorimer," observed Wilkes, in a sneering tone; "but you will now perceive you might have spared yourself the trouble. She was in excellent hands."

"So it seems, sir," rejoined Herbert; "and I ought to have been quite sure that no credit was to be attached to your assertion that you had consigned her to some one with whom you were unacquainted."

"Ha! ha!" laughed Wilkes. "You have found that out, eh? A mere quibble, which I am sure Mr. Walworth will now readily pardon."

"Don't say a word more about it, my dear sir," rejoined the old hosier.

"You may call it a quibble, sir," observed Herbert, sternly, "but I should use a shorter and stronger word."

"Hold, hold! Mr. Herbert," cried Sir Felix.

"What's that you say, sir?" demanded Wilkes, becoming very pale.

"If I have not made myself sufficiently intelli-

gible, I will be yet more explicit," rejoined Herbert.

"Nay, it will do," cried Wilkes. "Your object is evidently to provoke me. I might well refuse to go out with you, but your impertinence deserves chastisement. You shall hear from me, sir."

"Sir Felix," said Herbert, "as I am almost a stranger in town, and have few friends, may I venture to ask your aid in this matter?"

"Mine! my dear sir. I avoid duels, whether as principal or second. However, to oblige you, I will break through my rule in this instance."

"You make me for ever your debtor, sir," replied the young man. And, raising his hat, he strode haughtily away.

End of the Second Book.

BOOK III.

TRADESCANT.

I.

MOSS AND LEVY'S.

AT seven o'clock Tradescant and Chatteris were at Moss and Levy's in the Barbican.

Though the office was old and frouzy, a good deal of business of a certain kind was transacted within it. In the ante-room, boxes, apparently containing deeds and papers, were piled up to the very ceiling against the walls, and plans of estates and bills of auctions were stuck against the rails of the desks at which the clerks were seated. In this dirty and imperfectly-lighted ante-room the two young men were detained for a few minutes,

much to their disgust. Tradescant had made sure of finding Crutchet there, but the old man had not yet arrived.

At length an inner door was opened by Shadrach, who begged them to step in, adding, as they complied, "All's ready, gentlemen. I've got the money, and the bond is prepared—but where's Mr. Crutchet? We can do nothing without him."

"Oh! he'll be here presently," rejoined Tradescant, with affected indifference, but some internal misgiving.

At an office-table covered with papers, and lighted by a couple of flaring tallow candles, sat a sharp-looking, Jewish-featured man, dressed in black, who rose as the others entered the room, and was introduced by Shadrach as Mr. Moss.

"Pray be seated, gentlemen," said the scrivener, motioning them to a chair. "Are we ready, Mr. Shadrach?"

"No, sir," replied the money-lender. "We want Mr. Crutchet."

"I can't think what has detained him," observed Tradescant, with increasing uneasiness. "However, he's sure to come."

"Oh! quite sure," added Chatteris.

Five minutes more elapsed, and still Crutchet did not appear.

Mr. Moss took out his watch—a very handsome Tompion, with a gold chain and large bunch of seals attached to it—and held it to one of the candles.

"Quarter-past seven, gentlemen," he remarked. "I fear the business must be postponed."

"I hope not," cried Tradescant.

At this moment a clerk entered to say there was a person without who brought a message from Mr. Crutchet.

"Show him in!" cried Shadrach, and the next moment Candish made his appearance.

"You here, sir!" exclaimed Shadrach, distrustfully.

"Mr. Crutchet has sent me to make his excuses and express his regrets, sir," replied Candish, bowing.

"Excuses and regrets!" cried Tradescant, furiously. "I didn't think him capable of playing me such a shabby trick. He boasts that his word is as good as his bond, and he promised faithfully to be here."

"Perhaps Mr. Shadrach will take his word instead of his bond," rejoined Candish, smiling.

"No, that I won't," cried the Jew. "But what prevents him from coming? Does he desire to make another appointment?"

"Here is a letter from him, which will explain all," replied Candish, handing a note to Tradescant.

"Why not give it me at first?" cried the latter, tearing it open. "You shall hear what he says."

And holding it towards the light, he read as follows:

"'HONOURED AND DEAR SIR,—Contrary to my better judgment, I consented this morning to become your security to Samuel Shadrach for the repayment of the sum of 5000*l.*, to be lent you by said Shadrach, and to give him my bond. Reflection has since convinced me that this is a most iniquitous transaction, and that so far from serving you, honoured and dear sir, by enabling you to procure such a loan, I should be doing you a great and permanent injury, and, at the same time, should be wronging my respected employer.'

"Hang him for an old hypocrite!" exclaimed Tradescant. "Why didn't he think of this before?"

"Proceed, sir," said Shadrach. "Let's have the end on't!"

"'The latter part doesn't seem over-complimentary to you, Mr. Shadrach. However, since you wish it, I'll go on:

"'At the hazard of incurring your displeasure, I must, therefore, decline to have anything to do with the matter. I will neither enter that old extortioner's den, nor have any further communication with him.

"'Your faithful, humble servant,

"'TOBIAS CRUTCHET.'"

"'Old extortioner!' He calls me an 'old extortioner,' Moss," cried Shadrach. "That's libellous. I'll bring an action against him."

"I shouldn't be sorry, after his shameful conduct, if he had to pay heavy damages," cried Tradescant. "But can't you dispense with him, Shadrach? If I give you my bond, won't that suffice?"

"I'm afraid not, sir," replied the Jew. "But I'll just say a word to Mr. Moss."

And sitting down by the scrivener, they conferred together for a few minutes in an under tone.

"It's all up," whispered Tradescant to his brother-in-law. "I can tell from Moss's looks what the decision will be."

"I'm afraid you're right," replied Chatteris.

Their apprehensions were justified, for immediately afterwards Moss thus addressed them:

"In the absence of the proposed security, gentlemen, I cannot advise my client to lend the money. The sum is large, and the risk great. Unless you have other security to offer, there must be an end of the transaction."

"I've been put to a vast deal of trouble," grumbled Shadrach, "and apparently to no purpose."

"I'm the person most aggrieved," cried Tradescant. "I can't conceive what has caused Crutchet to change his mind so suddenly."

"But I can," replied Shadrach. "It's your doing, sir," he added to Candish.

"I won't deny it, Mr. Shadrach," returned the other, coolly; "but, so far from being angry, you ought to be very much obliged to me."

"Obliged! for what?—for losing——"

"Cent. per cent. on five thousand pounds—that's what you counted on—but you would never have got it. I would have taken good care of that. Your intended contract, as Mr. Moss very well knows, was unlawful, and would have been utterly void, while you yourself would have forfeited thrice the amount borrowed, a larger sum than you would like to lose, I fancy. Your scrivener himself would not have come off scot-free. In addition to a penalty, he would have got half a year's imprisonment, if he had been brought before the Lord Mayor. Therefore, I repeat, you ought to feel much obliged by my interference."

During this speech Shadrach and Moss exchanged uneasy looks, and the scrivener whispered to his client,

"You had better get rid of the matter. This person is evidently the Lord Mayor's agent."

"You are right, sir," replied Shadrach. "Gentlemen," he added to Tradescant and Chatteris, "I thought I was dealing with men of honour——"

"Why, so you are," cried both young men together. "We have nothing whatever to do with this person."

"I don't doubt it," replied Shadrach; "but sufficient care has not been taken to keep the affair private. Instead of appointing a public place like Moorfields for the negotiation, you should have come to my house. You would then have been safe from spies—yes, spies," he repeated, looking hard at Candish. "As it is, the arrangement was overheard—and you see the result. I'm sorry I can't accommodate you."

"I'm half inclined to cut this meddling old rascal's throat," cried Tradescant.

"Not here, sir, if you please," said Shadrach.

"Inflict any punishment you choose upon him in the street, but not here."

"When you learn my reasons for what I've done, you'll be more inclined to thank me than harm me," observed Candish. "I'll wait for you outside. Mr. Shadrach, your servant." And with a polite bow he left the room.

He was followed in a few moments by the two young men, who found him standing in the passage connected with the office.

"I hope you'll excuse me, gentlemen," he said, in an apologetic tone. "I have simply acted under orders. Can I be of any service to you?"

"A cool fellow this, upon my soul!" cried Tradescant. "He spoils our game, and then asks if he can serve us. Harkye, sir, can you lend us a few thousand pounds?"

"Thousands are far beyond me, sir," replied Candish; "but if a trifle like twenty guineas would be of any use I can accommodate you."

"Well, that will be better than nothing," rejoined Tradescant. "It will pay our supper at Pontac's, and enable us to try our luck at basset. Let us have the twenty guineas. I'll repay you to-morrow morning—perhaps to-night, if you come to Picard's ordinary, near Queenhithe Dock, before midnight."

"I won't fail to be there," said Candish; "but you can repay me, or not, at your convenience. You will find twenty guineas in this purse," he added, handing it to him. "I wish you good luck, sir."

"Harkye, sir," cried Tradescant. "I should like to have some explanation——"

"As much as you please to-morrow, sir," interrupted Candish. "But not this evening. You will see me at Picard's, where I may, perhaps, be of some further use to you. I think hazard is played there as well as basset?"

"Hazard, passage, inn-and-inn—what you please. And at cards, besides basset, you may play piquet,

ombre, English and French ruff, five cards, costly colours, bone-ace, and put."

"Picard's tables are the best in the City," observed Chatteris. "As large sums are staked there as at the Groom-Porters', or Speering's ordinary in Bell-yard."

"So I've heard," replied Candish. "Is there likely to be deep play to-night?"

"There *might* have been," rejoined Tradescant, significantly. "I wanted to settle accounts with Gleek and Bragge, but that can't be done now, unless some great stake should turn up at basset."

"Can you inform me, sir, whether the two individuals you have just mentioned—Messrs. Gleek and Bragge—will be there?" inquired Candish. "I should like to have an opportunity of witnessing their play."

"Then you may enjoy that pleasure to-night, for they are certain to be at Picard's. They expect to be paid, I tell you. However, I must find some means of pacifying them."

"Oh yes, we'll manage it, never fear," rejoined Chatteris. "Since nothing else is to be done, let us go at once to Pontac's. I have asked Sir Theodosius Turnbull to sup there with us."

"With all my heart," replied Tradescant.

On this, they got into their respective chairs, bidding the men take them to Abchurch-lane, where the noted coffee-house in question was situated, while Candish returned to the Lord Mayor's house in Cheapside, where he found Herbert, with whom he concocted a plan to be put into execution that night.

II.

PICARD'S.

PICARD'S ordinary—a notorious gaming-house, where all the rooks and sharpers to be met with in the City flocked to prey upon the dissolute sons of wealthy merchants and traders—stood on the east side of Queenhithe Dock, close to the stairs. It had a large balcony on the first floor, overlooking the river, where it was pleasant to sit in the cool of a summer's evening, and watch the various barks float by. But it was not to indulge in such harmless recreation as this that the majority of Picard's customers went thither. Their

object was play; and they found what they sought. The house possessed a basset-table with a well supplied bank, and smaller tables for piquet, whist, and ombre. An inner room was reserved for games without the tables, and here could be heard the rattling of dice, the shouts of the casters, the exulting laughter of the winners, or the yells and fearful imprecations of the losers.

It wanted about a quarter to eleven when Candish and Herbert entered this den of iniquity. The old man had again altered his attire, and appeared in black, with a bag-wig and ruffles. Moreover, he had taken the precaution to provide himself with a sword, and Herbert was similarly armed.

The lower room was full of guests, carousing and smoking, but a glance around it satisfied Candish that those he sought were not there, so he and his companion went up-stairs to the principal play-room, which was of considerable size, and provided with card-tables, and a large oval table, set

in the centre of the apartment, covered with green cloth, and designed for basset. A strong light was cast upon the tapis by a lamp furnished with reflectors, placed at either end. The table was large enough to accommodate twenty players, and about half that number were now seated around it. At one side of the room burnt a cheerful fire protected by a wire-guard, and on the other there were three French windows, opening upon the balcony, already described as overlooking the river.

Seated at the table with a pile of rouleaux of gold and a glittering heap of crown-pieces before him, constituting the bank, was the tailleur, or dealer—a young man, rather showily dressed, with a perfectly impassive countenance. No turn of fortune, it was evident, was likely to move him. On his right stood the croupier, likewise a young man, but apparently of a very different temperament from his phlegmatic companion, his eyes being bright and quick, and his features extremely mobile. For the convenience of the

punters, a little book containing thirteen cards was placed on the table opposite each chair. Besides those engaged in play, there were several other persons, whose features and manner proclaimed their dissolute character, collected in little knots in different parts of the room. They were betting together, making matches for Epsom and Newmarket, or disputing about the merits of different cock-feeders and trainers. Amongst these groups, the gayest-looking and most noticeable comprised Tradescant and Chatteris, with their fashionable friends, Wilkes, Tom Potter, Sir Francis Dashwood, and Sir William Stanhope. With them also was Sir Theodosius Turnbull, a Leicestershire baronet, who had been a great fox-hunter till he grew too fat and heavy for the saddle. He was now in pretty good cue, having drunk three bottles of the delicious Haut Brion, for which Pontac's was renowned. These personages were talking and betting much in the same style as the rest of the company.

"I'll lay six to four—sixty guineas to forty, if you like," cried Tradescant, "that Drew Barantine's great ginger-hackle beats any cock Tom Trattles can produce."

"Done! guineas," cried Tom Potter. "Tom Trattles is the best cock-master going. When shall the main be fought?"

"This day week," replied Tradescant. "Stay! that won't do. For aught I know that may be my wedding-day."

"So you really are going to marry the hosier's daughter, Lorimer?" said Tom Potter.

"I suppose so," replied Tradescant.

"I don't believe the match will take place," cried Wilkes. "The girl will jilt you, as she jilted your fire-eating cousin. Come, I'll bet you a hundred the marriage doesn't come off."

"Done!" cried Tradescant, "and I half hope I may be obliged to pay the wager."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed his companions.

"I'll bet you another hundred, Lorimer, that she marries your cousin," said Tom Potter.

"Take him," whispered Wilkes, "for I mean to cut the impertinent puppy's throat."

"Don't call him my cousin, I beg, Mr. Potter," cried Tradescant, offended.

"Do you mean to run Regulus at Newmarket next spring, Lorimer?" inquired Dashwood.

"Assuredly, and I mean to win the Suffolk stakes."

"I'll take the field against you for fifty," said Dashwood.

"Done!" cried Tradescant.

"Don't book that!" cried Wilkes. "If you marry Alice Walworth you must sell Regulus. I heard old Walworth declare he didn't like gaming and racing—ha! ha!"

"That shan't hinder me from making the bet, Dashwood," rejoined Tradescant. "Marry or not, I don't sell Regulus."

"I applaud your resolution, Lorimer," said Stanhope.

"Well, I only wish I had your chance, Lorimer," remarked Wilkes. "Alice Walworth is a devilish fine girl. For her sake, I could be content to dwell in St. Mary-axe, and even turn hosier, if my father-in-law made a point of it."

"No jokes at old Walworth's expense, if you please, Mr. Wilkes," said Tradescant. "He's as rich as a nabob, and means to give his daughter a plum."

"A plum!" exclaimed Wilkes. "Egad, hosiery must be a better business than I thought. But I have no faith in these splendid offers. I'll take odds you don't get ten thousand with her."

"Two to one I do," cried Tradescant.

"Done!" rejoined Wilkes. "If the marriage fails, you pay."

"Pshaw! I'm sure to win. But between ourselves, I would rather have ten thousand without the wife, than a plum with her."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Tom Potter. "That's what I call a frank confession. I hope it won't reach the young lady's ears, or you are likely to get neither one nor the other."

"I'll lay odds the Lord Mayor doesn't consent to the match," said Stanhope.

"What makes you think that?" cried Tradescant, surprised.

"Never mind. Will you bet?"

"No; but I'll take odds I marry her without his lordship's consent."

"Then you won't get the sugar-plum," cried Wilkes. "If the Lord Mayor runs rusty—as you seem to fear he will—old Walworth will run rusty too, and decline the honour of the alliance. Of course, the girl has nothing of her own, so it would be useless to run away with her. Make sure of your honoured sire, Lorimer, or the thing's up."

"But how the deuce am I to make sure of him?" rejoined Tradescant.

"If you've any misgivings, don't let old Wal-

worth see him till the marriage contract is signed. Sir Felix Bland will manage that for you."

"Seventy to fifty old Walworth finds you out, Lorimer, and turns the tables upon you," said Stanhope.

"Done! — guineas," cried Tradescant. "I'll book all these bets, and then we'll sit down to basset."

The foregoing conversation had been conducted in so loud a key, that the greater part of it reached the ears both of Candish and Herbert, whose presence, however, was unnoticed by the speakers. As Tradescant took his place at the table, Candish stepped quickly forward, and stationed himself behind the young man.

As soon as they were all seated, the punters took up their thirteen cards, and selecting one or more, according to fancy, laid them on the table, placing a couch, or stake, on each.

Taking a pack of cards, the tailleur then turned it up so as to display the bottom card, which, in

the language of the game, is termed the *fasse*, and which proving to be the eight of diamonds, all the cards of the same suit laid on the table paid to the bank a moiety of the stakes set upon them by the punters.

The tailleur next began to deal, calling out, "Ace of hearts wins—five of clubs loses—knave of diamonds wins—seven loses," and so forth—every other card alternately winning and losing until he came to the last, on which, by the rule of the game, although it had been just turned up, and was consequently known by the punters, some of whom had staked upon it, he paid nothing.

The game went on with varying consequences, but, as may be imagined, the greater part of the stakes speedily found their way to the bank. Tradescant had laid three cards on the tapis, putting ten pounds on each, but the money—all he possessed—was swept away before the second pack was dealt out. But the young man could not bear to stop. Yet how go on? He had not even a

crown in his pocket. He glanced at Chatteris, but the latter shook his head. In this dilemma, Candish came to his aid, and taking a fifty-pound note from a pocket-book, offered it to him. Tradescant took it without a moment's hesitation, promising to return the amount at once if he was lucky. He was about to get the note changed at the bank, when Candish stopped him, and said, in a whisper, "Put down the whole sum on that ace of hearts, and try for the grand chance."

"I may try," replied Tradescant, laughing, "but I shan't get it. I never saw the sixty-seven won yet."

"Make the attempt now," rejoined Candish.

Tradescant complied, laid the note on the ace, and was shortly afterwards gladdened by the tailleur's cry of "Ace wins—tray loses."

"Well begun!" whispered Candish.

"Paroli!" cried Tradescant, bending down a corner of his card.

The tailleur dealt on, and the welcome words, "Ace wins," were repeated.

Candish made no remark, but gave the young man an encouraging look.

"Sept et le va!" cried Tradescant, bending down a second corner of his card.

"What are you about?" cried Chatteris. "You've thrown away your second chance—*350l.*"

"Never mind him," urged Candish. "You're in a run of luck."

"On my soul I think so," replied the young man, laughing. "But I owe it to you."

Meanwhile, the tailleur dealt on, and once more, to Tradescant's infinite delight, called out, "Ace wins."

"Quinze et le va!" exclaimed Tradescant, turning down the third corner of his card.

"Seven hundred and fifty!—you won't tempt fortune further?" cried Chatteris.

Tradescant paid no attention to the remark. A look from Candish urged him on.

Again the tailleur dealt, and again were heard the cheering words, "Ace wins."

"Trente et le va!" exclaimed Tradescant, bending the fourth corner of his card.

"Sixteen hundred and fifty!—you had better take it," cried Chatteris.

The tailleur looked at him, something more than ordinary interest appearing on his immovable countenance.

Tradescant seemed undecided. Certain of a large sum, he did not like to lose it. But Candish whispered, "Courage! Push your fortune to its height."

By this time all the interest of the game was centred in Tradescant. His uninterrupted run of luck had surprised all the other players, and they wondered whether the fickle goddess would desert him at the last.

"Will you have your money, Mr. Lorimer?" inquired the tailleur.

"No," returned Tradescant. "I'll try the last chance. Soixante et le va!"

The tailleur made no remark, but carefully shuffling the cards, began to deal them again, but much more deliberately than before.

"Ten to five—a thousand to five hundred—your card don't turn up," cried Tom Potter.

"Take him," whispered Candish.

"Done!" cried Tradescant. "I'll make the same bet with any one else."

"I take you—I take you," cried Wilkes and Dashwood together.

Scarcely were the words uttered, when the point was decided. The lucky card was again turned up, and Tradescant declared a winner of sixty-seven times the amount of his original stake—or 3350*l.* Besides this, the bets he had won amountedto 3000*l.* more. He could scarcely credit his good fortune.

"I owe all this to you," he said to Candish; "but you must share my winnings."

"You are very generous, sir," replied the old man; "but it must not be. I can only take back the sum I've lent you. But don't trouble yourself about me. Secure your money from the bank."

The caution did not appear altogether needless, for the tailleur and croupier, looking perfectly confounded by the unexpected stroke of fortune, made no attempt at settlement.

"The money, gentlemen, if you please," said Tradescant.

"You shall have three thousand pounds, Mr. Lorimer," replied the tailleur, "and then the bank will be broken. We must owe you the remainder."

"Very good," replied Tradescant. "We are now quits," he added to Wilkes and Dashwood. "As to you, Sir William," he said to Stanhope, "instead of having to pay you four hundred pounds, you will owe me six."

"Exactly, my dear fellow," replied Sir William Stanhope, "and I congratulate you most sincerely on your good luck. Fortune for once has befriended you, but I advise you not to tempt her smiles again."

"You're afraid of me, I see, Sir William," cried Tradescant, intoxicated by his success.

"Count your money, if you please, sir," cried the croupier, pushing a roll of bank-notes, a pile of rouleaux, and a heap of crown pieces towards him.

"Shall I help you to count it, Tradescant?" said Chatteris, coming up.

"Ay, do, Tom," replied the young man. "And help yourself at the same time to a thousand. I little thought I should be able to accommodate you."

Chatteris did not manifest any scruples, but counting the bank-notes, and finding they made exactly the sum in question, he put the roll into his pocket.

"What the deuce shall I do with all these crown pieces?" observed Tradescant, laughing.

"I'll tell you what you shall do with them, my dear—you shall give them to me," said Shadrach, stepping forward from a corner where he had remained perdue. "Bless my heart! what luck you've had! I never saw such a thing done before, upon my soul."

"What! is that you, old cent. per cent.?" said Tradescant. "I didn't know you were in the room."

"Oh yes, Mr. Lorimer, I've been here all the time. I've been sitting in yonder corner. I watched the game, my dear, and you played beautifully—beautifully indeed. What luck! bless my heart, what luck—ha! ha! ha! When I saw you win, I said to myself, 'Now's your time, Shadrach. You've only to put Mr. Lorimer in mind of his note, and he'll pay it.'"

"What note? you usurious old rascal! I never gave you any," cried Tradescant.

"True," replied Shadrach, "but you gave a promissory note for two thousand to Messrs. Gleek and Bragge, and they transferred it to me. Here it is. All regular, you see, and the note's due. I wouldn't press for payment, but as you're in cash, it can't be inconvenient."

"Well, I suppose I must pay," rejoined Tradescant. "Take your money," he added, snatching the note, and tearing it in pieces.

"I've a little matter to settle with you, captain," said the Jew, addressing Chatteris.

"With me?" exclaimed the captain, turning pale. "I hope my note for a thousand pounds to Major Pepper hasn't found its way to your hands?"

"Indeed but it has, captain," replied Shadrach. "I won't hurt your feelings by mentioning what I gave for it, but I shall be happy to exchange it for the bank-notes you've just put into your pocket."

"Zounds! won't you allow me a few hours'

enjoyment of them, Shadrach? Present the note to-morrow, and I'll honour it."

"No time like the present, captain. To-morrow mightn't be convenient—so, if you please, we'll settle at once."

"Why, you're a footpad, Shadrach—only you use a bill instead of a pistol. Here's the money, and be hanged to you."

And he handed him the notes in exchange for the bill.

As soon as he had counted the money the Jew departed, with an exulting grin upon his sallow features. And the bank being broken, and play consequently at an end, most of the company quitted the room at the same time.

III.

THE BOOKS.

"COME," cried Wilkes, "we've had enough here. I move an adjournment to the Dilettanti Club."

"I'm with you," replied Tom Potter. "Won't you come, too, Lorimer?"

"I'll join you there in an hour," rejoined Tradescant. "I mean to try my luck at hazard. I feel sure of winning."

"You *won't* win if you play with Gleek and Bragge," said Tom Potter; "and I see they've just come in. I've already cautioned you against those

two rooks, and I warn you against them once more."

"Oh! I've no reason to doubt them!" exclaimed Tradescant.

As they were talking, the two individuals alluded to by Potter approached. Both were showily dressed in laced coats and flowered silk waistcoats, and wore Ramilies periwigs, deep laced ruffles, and swords with silver hilts. But in spite of their gay attire there was something equivocal in their looks and manner that would not allow them to pass for gentlemen. Gleek was the younger of the two, and had a slight figure and pale features, lit up by quick, restless black eyes, and hands delicately white as those of a woman. Bragge was larger and coarser-looking, with blubber lips, an ace of clubs nose, and a copper colour. They were received with great haughtiness by all the party except Tradescant; and when Gleek addressed Sir William Stanhope, the latter turned contemptuously upon his heel.

"Don't presume to address me, sir," said Tom Potter to Bragge. "I have no acquaintance with you."

The bully was about to make an angry reply, but the resolute expression of the other's countenance checked him.

"If you won't come with us, Lorimer," pursued Potter, "don't neglect my caution." And he glanced so significantly at Bragge, that the latter exclaimed,

"Had that remark any reference to me, sir?"

"Apply it if you please, sir," replied Potter.

And with a contemptuous look he quitted the room with his friends. Captain Chatteris and the fat Leicestershire baronet, however, remained with Tradescant.

"He shall pay for this insolence," cried Bragge. "I'll cane him publicly in the Mall to-morrow."

"Soh, Mr. Lorimer," cried Gleek, "I hear you've had rare luck at basset—broken the bank, eh? You'll empty our pockets next."

"I'll try, gentlemen—I'll try," replied Tradescant. "You've both won a good deal from me. It's only fair I should have my revenge."

"And we won't refuse it you," said Bragge. "Shall we begin with passage?"

"No, let us go at once to hazard," rejoined Tradescant.

"I'm ready," cried Bragge, taking a box from his pocket, and rattling the dice within it.

"No music like this, Mr. Lorimer," cried Gleek, rattling a box in his turn.

"Here, sirrah," cried Tradescant to a drawer, "give me a box and dice, and another for Sir Theodosius."

"Not for me," said the Leicestershire baronet. "I'll look on and bet."

As soon as he was provided with the necessary implements for play, Tradescant proceeded to the table which the rooks had selected for the game. He was followed by Sir Theodosius and Chatteris.

Elated by his previous success, Tradescant made

sure of winning, and was all eagerness to commence; and on the onset it seemed as if his expectations were about to be realised, for he made several lucky throws in succession, and won twenty pounds from each of his adversaries.

"Deuce take it! I can't think what ails the dice to-night," cried Gleek. "I've scarcely had a chance yet, and haven't nicked the main once."

"I never threw worse," added Bragge. "All the luck is with Lorimer."

"Don't be daunted, gentlemen," cried Tradescant. "I'll play as long as you please, and for as much as you please. I should like to win a few hundreds from you."

"You shall win thousands if you can, Mr. Lorimer," cried Bragge, putting a hundred pounds on the table. "I'm no flincher."

"Nor I," added Gleek, imitating his colleague's example.

"I'll bet ten guineas on your next cast, Lorimer," said Sir Theodosius.

"I'll take you, sir," replied Bragge.

"So will I," added Gleek, shaking his box. "Seven's the main!—ha! ames-ace!"

"Seven's the main!" cried Bragge, throwing. "Confusion! twelve!"

"Now for it," cried Tradescant, throwing in his turn. "Egad! I've nicked it—eleven." And he swept all the money from the board.

"We each owe you ten guineas," said the two rooks to Sir Theodosius.

"Let it stand, gentlemen," replied the Leicestershire baronet. "I shall go on backing Mr. Lorimer."

For a few minutes longer uninterrupted good luck attended Tradescant. As the stakes were doubled after each successful cast, there was now a considerable sum on the table. All this time the proceedings of the rooks had been carefully watched by Candish, who, stationed behind Tradescant, perceived that they had dexterously contrived to change their dice.

"Seven's the main," cried Tradescant, "quatre-trey."

"Cinque deuce!" cried Bragge, throwing.

"Six ace!" cried Gleek, following him.

"The chances are equal. Another cast must decide it," cried Tradescant.

"Hold!" exclaimed Candish, "the chances are *not* equal. These dice are loaded," he added, covering those used by Gleek with his hand.

"And so are these," cried Herbert, snatching Bragge's dice from the table.

"How dare you make such a charge against a gentleman, sir?" cried Gleek, vainly attempting to push away Candish's hand.

"I say the dice are loaded," cried Candish, giving them to Tradescant. "Split them, and you will see."

"Fire and fury! No such indignity shall be offered to me," roared Gleek. "I'll have your heart's blood."

"Both dice are filled with quicksilver," cried

Herbert, who had shattered them upon the hearth.

"And so are these," cried Tradescant, flinging them at Gleek's head. "You are a cheat and a villain, and your accomplice is no better."

"You now see how you've been imposed upon, sir," said Candish, "and what rogues you've had to deal with."

"I do! I do!" rejoined Tradescant.

"This is a well-contrived trick, but it won't pass," cried Gleek. "We're not to be plundered in this manner with impunity. Give up the money you've robbed us of, or you don't leave this room alive." And he drew his sword.

"What ho! there—without!" shouted Bragge, knocking the floor with a chair.

And in reply to the signal some half a dozen ruffians of villanous mein made their appearance at the doorway.

Sir Theodosius was now seriously alarmed.

"I must have been mad to come here," he cried. "We shall all be murdered. Help! help! watch watch!"

"Hold your tongue, you silly old fool!" cried Bragge. "No harm shall be done you if you behave properly."

But the fat baronet rushed to the window, and tried to get it open. Darting after him, Bragge pulled him forcibly backwards, alarming him dreadfully. His cries brought Herbert to his assistance, who attacked Bragge in his turn. A general scuffle then ensued. Swords were drawn on all sides, and passes exchanged—luckily, without much effect. In the confusion chairs and card-tables were upset, and the candles and lamps rolled on the ground, burying all in darkness.

If the Leicestershire baronet had been alarmed before it was nothing to his present fright, and it must be owned that his fears were not unwarranted. However, he contrived to get to the window—

which, as we have said, opened upon a balcony overlooking the river — and at last, to his great delight, succeeded in unfastening it. This accomplished, he rushed out upon the balcony, and clamoured lustily for help.

IV.

FIRE.

MEANWHILE, the conflict raged in the room, with what result could not be known, all being buried in darkness, and no one could tell whether he was engaged with friend or foe. All at once, above the din of strife, a watchman's rattle was heard, and a similar noise was repeated, proving that the Leicestershire baronet's outcries had given the alarm. At the same time, fresh apprehension was caused by the sudden bursting out of flames at the back of the room. Apparently, one of the lamps which had fallen on the floor before be-

coming extinguished had set fire to some curtains, and these now blazed up. At this new danger the combat instantly ceased; the curtains were torn down, and prompt measures taken to check the progress of the fire. In vain: other combustible materials had caught, and the house being built of timber, now old and dry, it burnt with such rapidity as to threaten its speedy destruction

The moment the fire broke out, the two rooks, who seemed fully alive to the danger of the situation, beat a hasty retreat, dashed down the staircase, and got out of the house. They were quickly followed by the rest of their associates, and in another moment only Tradescant and Chatteris, with Herbert and Candish, were left in the room.

"We must away too," cried Herbert. "It won't be safe to remain here longer. The fire is gaining rapidly."

"Where's Sir Theodosius?" inquired Tradescant.

"Here," replied the baronet, putting his head, from which the wig was gone, through the window. "Is the fight over?—are the villains gone? Bless my life, what a fire!"

"Yes, yes, you'll be burnt to death if you stay here," cried Candish. "Don't lose a moment, if you value your life. Come along!"

The whole party were then about to hurry down stairs, when they were stopped by a posse of watchmen and constables—mustering some ten or a dozen men — bearing lanterns, and armed with staves and truncheons.

"Here are some of the villains left," cried the foremost watchman; "the others have given us the slip, but we'll make sure of these. You are our prisoners, masters. Resistance will be useless, so I advise you not to attempt it. Come along with us quietly to the watch-house in Bread-street. You'll have to give an account of yourselves to the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House to-morrow morning."

"'Sdeath! that mustn't be," exclaimed Tradescant. "Here are five guineas for you, my good fellows. Let us pass."

"Well, come down stairs, and we'll talk about it," rejoined the watchman.

"Don't go with them," whispered Chatteris; "they'll play us some cursed trick. The window's open; it will be easy to drop from the balcony to the ground."

No sooner was the hint given than it was acted on. A rush was made by the party towards the window. Of course the watchmen followed, but they were held in check by Herbert and Tradescant, who opposed them with their drawn swords. As the fire was now burning fiercely, and the watchmen suffered from the heat, they determined to bring the matter to a speedy issue, and dealt some heavy blows against the young men, which the latter with difficulty warded off.

"Make good your retreat," said Herbert to his cousin. "It won't do for you to be captured."

"Yes, go," added Candish; "I'll take your place."

Thus urged, the young man sprang through the window. On gaining the balcony, he found that Chatteris had already disappeared, but Sir Theodosius was still there, clinging desperately to the rails of the balcony, but not daring to let himself drop. Tradescant instantly flew to his assistance, and with the help of Chatteris, who was standing below, managed to effect the stout baronet's safe descent. This accomplished, he himself descended. At the same juncture, a wherry approached the shore, and the liberal fare offered by Tradescant soon induced the two watermen who rowed it to take all three on board.

"Stand out a few yards from shore," said Tradescant; "we must wait for our friends."

"Werry good, your honour," replied one of the watermen, a crafty old fellow; "if you'll only pay us well, we'll do whatsomever you axes."

Accordingly, they pulled out some twenty or

thirty yards, and then remained stationary opposite the burning house. But though an anxious look-out was kept, nothing could be seen of Herbert or Candish. Indeed, a loud shout proceeding from the house seemed to proclaim that they had fallen into the hands of the watchmen, while a few minutes afterwards, flames bursting through the windows, made it evident that the room was untenantable, or that any rash individuals lingering within it were doomed to destruction. Still, though aware they could render no further aid, the party in the boat tarried to gaze at the blazing building, which now formed a very striking spectacle.

But let us now see what had befallen Herbert and Candish. Endowed with remarkable activity, there is no doubt that, if left to himself, Herbert could easily have escaped from the watch. But he would not leave Candish, and it was while gallantly struggling to rescue the old man, whose sword had been beaten from his grasp, and who

was being dragged off by his captors, that he himself was overpowered.

Both their prisoners being thus secured, the watchmen gave the shout heard by those on the water, and then hurried down stairs as expeditiously as they could. It was time. Had they remained another minute, not one of them would have quitted the place alive. The whole of the roof had caught fire, and some of the blazing rafters fell in, filling the room with flame and smoke. By this time a great number of suspicious-looking persons were collected in the narrow street or alley at the back of the ordinary, and it required considerable exertions on the part of the constables and the watch to prevent them from plundering the house under pretence of rendering assistance. All that could be saved was removed from the premises as quickly as possible, and the alley was partially blocked up with goods and furniture.

By this time an engine had been brought from

Queenhithe, but owing to the confined situation of the premises great difficulty was experienced in causing it to play upon the burning structure. Another engine, set upon a barge, was also brought on the river side of the house, and this was far more efficient, but the conflagration had now made far too great progress to be checked, and the utmost that could be done was to endeavour to save the adjoining habitations by throwing a constant jet of water upon them.

The spectacle as witnessed by those within the boat, who still remained looking on, was now exceedingly grand. The night being profoundly dark, and perfectly calm, full effect was given to the fire. The habitation, as we have already said, being composed of old and dry timber, was rapidly consumed. The fire burnt with great fierceness, the flames springing to a vast height, illuminating not only the densely-packed intervening buildings in Thames-street, Paul's-chain, and Doctors'-commons, but the massive structure of St. Paul's itself,

which was now displayed as clearly as in broad daylight; and casting a stream of radiance across the darkling current. The jagged buildings on the banks of the river looking black and indistinct, had a very picturesque effect. Many other wherries besides that occupied by Tradescant and his friends were there, and others were momentarily arriving, or hastening to the spot. Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, the Southwark side of the river, facing the conflagration, was crowded with spectators, while London Bridge, and, indeed, every other place commanding a view, had some occupant. Owing to the crowded state of the street at the rear, and the confusion prevailing in it, the watchmen did not immediately convey their prisoners to the watch-house, but took them to an adjoining tavern, known as the Horse-shoe and Magpie.

V.

AN HOUR'S DURANCE.

HERE they were introduced to a small room adjoining the bar, and a watchman left in charge of them.

"Now make yourselves comfortable, gem'men," said this worthy, setting his lantern on the table. "Call for anything you likes. I'm agreeable. In case you don't know it, I may tell you the Horse-shoe's a famous house for punch, and you'll have plenty of time to drink a bowl, for you'll be here an hour or better, I dare say. There's no liquor allowed in the watch-house."

"I want nothing to drink," cried Herbert, seating himself on one of the rush-bottomed chairs with which the room was furnished.

"Nor I," said Candish. "But order something for yourself, my good fellow," he added, tossing the Charley a crown piece.

"Ah! I see, your honour understands business," the watchman replied, taking the money. And opening the door, he called for a quartern of gin, with a pipe and tobacco, all of which were brought him by a drawer. Thus provided, he sat down, and after sipping the gin, which he pronounced a perfect cordial, proceeded to light his pipe. While doing this, he made another effort to induce his prisoners to follow his example, but without success. Neither, though the watchman himself was disposed to be talkative, did they appear inclined for conversation. So, finding he got no reply to his remarks, the guardian of the night voted his companions dull fellows, and smoked his pipe in silence. Both Herbert and Candish had dropped

off into a doze, when they were suddenly roused by a knocking at the door, which had been locked inside by the watchman.

"Open quick!" cried a voice outside. "It's me, Ned Finch. Here's the devil to pay."

"What's the matter?" cried the watchman, getting up and unlocking the door.

"You would soon have found out what's the matter, and to your cost, Corny Cloyde, if I hadn't come to warn you," replied his brother watchman. "The Lord Mayor is coming to see the prisoners."

"The Lord Mayor! impossible, Ned," rejoined Corny.

"You'll find it quite true," said Finch. "His lordship came down to see that due precautions were taken to put out the fire and prevent it from spreading, and while questioning the men as to the cause of the occurrence, heard about the prisoners, and being informed they had been taken to the Hoss-shoe, said he'd go see 'em. So I ran on to

tell you. There!" he added, triumphantly, "you didn't believe me. His lordship's at the door now."

"I'm ready for him," rejoined Corny, thrusting his pipe into his pocket, and hastily hiding the measure of gin and the glass under the table.

This hurried dialogue, as may be supposed, was not lost upon the prisoners, and was satisfactory, inasmuch as it held out a prospect of speedy release. A loud clamour and shuffling of feet now announced that several persons had entered the outer room. Presently the noise ceased, and a voice, easily recognised by both his auditors as that of Sir Gresham Lorimer, was heard inquiring about the prisoners. Then steps approached the door, and in another moment the Lord Mayor was seen standing at it, attended by the host and hostess, both bearing lights. Behind him were a couple of beadles, with a posse of constables and watchmen.

"Here are the prisoners, an please your honour-

able lordship," said Corny, advancing towards him, and inclining his person. "Both desperate characters—notorious sharpers."

"Sharpers, eh!" exclaimed the Lord Mayor. "I'm glad you've caught them. A stop must be put to these practices. If Picard's ordinary had not been burnt down I would have inflicted upon him the full penalty of two hundred pounds for keeping a gaming-table. But these rogues shall be fined, and give ample securities for their future good conduct. I won't let them loose to prey upon society again."

"Your lordship is quite right," said the landlord. "You can't be too severe upon these cheating gamesters. Picard's ordinary has been a great nuisance to the neighbourhood, and it's a blessing it's burnt down."

"Stand aside and let me look at them," said the Lord Mayor to Corny. "What do I see?" he exclaimed, in the utmost surprise. "You have made

some stupid mistake, fellow. I thought you had caught those two sharpers, Gleek and Bragge. These persons are not gamesters."

"Oh yes, begging your honourable lordship's pardon, they are," replied Corny, "arrant gamesters. We took 'em in the fact. Let 'em be searched, and I'll lay my life dice and cards will be found in their pockets."

"Search us," cried Herbert, "and if it should prove as this fellow states, let the severest punishment be inflicted upon us."

"How came you at this gaming-house, for I presume you cannot deny having been there?" asked the Lord Mayor.

"We were both there, but not with the intention of playing," replied Herbert.

"His lordship wouldn't believe that if you were on your oath," cried Corny. "One of their associates won several thousand pounds, and broke the bank."

"Is this correct?" demanded the Lord Mayor.

"The man is right in stating that the bank was broken," replied Herbert.

"By whom?"

"Your lordship must excuse me if I decline to answer the question."

"I can easily find it out for your lordship," cried Corny. "Ned Finch heard the rascal's name. It was something like your lordship's own. Ah! there's Ned himself. Tell his lordship who it was that broke the bank."

"I didn't catch the name," replied Ned, evasively, "but I should know the gentleman again if I clapped eyes upon him. He is a very fine young man."

"We should have captured him if it hadn't been for these two," said Corny. "They kept us at bay with their swords while the others got off."

"No one, I hope, was hurt?" inquired the Lord Mayor, anxiously.

"A few scratches, that was all, my lord. Our

opponents got as good as they gave. There was one fat old fellow with them who lost his wig, and got a knock or two. But no one was much hurt."

"That's well," said the Lord Mayor.

"I can prove, my lord, if needful," said Candish, "that I was present with a laudable design, and that this young gentleman merely went with me to enable me to carry it out. He neither played nor intended to play. Our object was to expose the tricks of the two sharpers your lordship has referred to, and in this we completely succeeded. We were fortunately able to open the eyes of one who has for some time been their dupe."

"Your statement carries conviction with it, and I therefore think it needless to pursue the inquiry further," said the Lord Mayor. "You are both discharged, and I am sorry you have been at all detained."

"Oh! that is not of the slightest consequence, my lord," said Candish. "We are too well

satisfied with what we have accomplished to heed an hour's detention. But we may congratulate ourselves that your lordship was brought hither by the fire, or we must have passed the night in the watch-house."

"And have been brought before me in the justice court of the Mansion House to-morrow," rejoined the Lord Mayor. "You have had an escape certainly, and I'm exceedingly glad of it. Hark ye, my good fellows," he added to the constables, "those two sharpers, Gleek and Bragge, mustn't be allowed to escape. Ferret them out. I rely on their capture, d'ye hear? Now follow me, gentlemen, and I'll see you safely through the crowd outside."

With this he quitted the house, while Herbert and Candish, acting upon his suggestion, kept close behind him, and, being surrounded by the constables, passed without hindrance or molestation through the noisy mob, and ultimately found

their way to the house in Cheapside just as Sir Gresham had entered it.

It was late enough then, being past two o'clock, but Bow Church clock struck four before Tradescant was lighted to his chamber by Tiplady.

VI.

CHAT AT BREAKFAST.

NEXT morning the Lord Mayor, having previously sent Tomline to apprise Millicent and Prue that he would breakfast with them in their own room, made his appearance about nine o'clock, and found all ready for him.

Both girls were dressed with a simplicity that was especially agreeable to Sir Gresham, and he could not help thinking how much better they looked in their plain, neat attire, with their luxuriant tresses free from powder and pomatum, their complexions fresh and clear, and such as

Nature had given them, than his eldest daughters in their rich silks and satins, and with their artificially-heightened charms. Their smiling countenances and eyes beaming with pleasure evinced their satisfaction at seeing him.

After an affectionate greeting had passed between them, Millicent said, in tones that bespoke her delight, "Well, this is really very kind of you, papa, to bestow a little of your valuable time upon us. You cannot conceive how pleased we both were to receive your message by Tomline."

"Yes, indeed, uncle," added Prue. "You have made us happy for the day. We did not see you yesterday, and I almost feared we might suffer a similar deprivation to-day."

"Neither would you have seen me, my dear, unless I had come now," rejoined Sir Gresham, smiling, "for my time is so much engrossed by my official duties and by engagements of one kind or another that I have scarcely a moment to myself. A Lord Mayor has so many demands upon him

that he has little to bestow on his own family. After eleven o'clock I belong to the public. You must not be surprised, therefore, if I should now and then come and breakfast with you."

"Surprised, papa!" exclaimed Milly. "We shall be enchanted. You cannot come too often—that is, if mamma can spare you."

"Why, to tell you the truth," said Sir Gresham, smiling, "I was rather anxious to escape a tête-à-tête with her ladyship."

"Oh! now you are spoiling all, uncle," cried Prue. "You won't allow us to flatter ourselves that you come to see us. However, we'll do our best to be agreeable to you, and hope we may induce you to repeat the visit."

On this they all sat down to the breakfast-table, where the honours were done in a very charming manner by Milly. Tea was already made, and chocolate—Sir Gresham's customary beverage—was brought in, hot and foaming, by a page. There were patés, cold chickens, ham

and tongue, and plenty of other good things upon a side-table.

"You know I like a substantial breakfast, Milly," said the Lord Mayor, helping himself to some Yorkshire pie, "and have provided accordingly."

"It is your own breakfast, papa," replied Milly. "On receiving your message, I ordered it to be brought up here. You must not suppose that Prue and I feast in this manner. Very little contents us, I assure you."

"There you're wrong, my dear. Always lay in a good foundation for the day. This is an excellent pie. Can't I prevail upon you to taste it, Prue?"

"No thank you, uncle. I never touch meat in a morning."

"Then you're not the girl I took you for," cried Sir Gresham. "You must improve your habits, and follow my example. You prefer cakes, sweetmeats, honey, marmalade, and all such trash,

I suppose, to good, solid, wholesome food. Milly is just as absurd. She eats nothing—absolutely nothing."

"Oh! don't say so, papa. I'm sure I've an excellent appetite. Mamma often says I eat too much."

"Does she?" cried Sir Gresham. "Then she doesn't apply the same rule to herself, that's all I can say. If she had tasted this pie, for instance, she would most assuredly have come again—and quite right too. Speaking of your aunt, Prue—have you seen much of her since your stay here?"

"Not a great deal, uncle," she replied. "Lady Dawes and Mrs. Chatteris were here yesterday, and I fancy they have no great affection for me."

"I fear not," said Sir Gresham; "but never mind."

"Yes, I told Prue not to mind," said Milly. "It's my sisters' way. They are often very cold

and haughty to me, but I'm used to it, and don't heed it."

"Well, Milly and I must try to make amends for the sorry treatment you experience from the others," said Sir Gresham. "We shall remove to the Mansion House in a day or so, and then you can either stay here with Herbert, or go with us, as you like best."

"Oh, Prue will go with us, I'm sure," cried Milly. "I can't spare her."

"If my aunt wouldn't think me in the way, I should like of all things to stay at the Mansion House," said Prue. "It's quite a palace, I'm told —much finer than Guildhall."

"Quite a different thing, child. The one is an ancient edifice; the other modern. The Mansion House has only just been built—that is to say, it was finished eight years ago. But it is very magnificent, no doubt, and you'll be lodged like a princess while you stay there."

"Then you are resolved to take me, uncle—but if my aunt should say no?"

"The Lord Mayor is omnipotent in the City, my dear. What he wills is law."

"Very well, uncle, you shan't find me rebellious or contumacious. What you tell me to do I shall do."

"Then I'll tell you what you must do, my dear. You must see her ladyship's milliner, Mrs. Grogram, to-day, and direct her to make you a set of dresses suitable to the Mansion House entertainments—similar to those she is making for Milly."

"Oh, you are much too good, uncle."

"Then you must have shoes, gloves, hats, fans, ornaments, trinkets—all that a fine lady can require—all that my niece should wear. Milly will tell you what you want."

"I scarcely know myself, papa. But I dare say we shall easily find out."

"All I desire is that you should be fully

equipped, and without loss of time," said Sir Gresham. "So see to it, girl, see to it. If there should be any mistake, Milly must bear the blame."

"I, papa—why so?"

"Because I expect you to see my directions implicitly fulfilled. I don't require you to look after Herbert——"

"Oh no, papa, I should hope not."

"But you must see him handsomely dressed. I don't want him, though, to become a fop, like Tradescant."

"Hadn't you better send your own tailor to him, papa?"

"I mean to do so. But you must give him the advantage of your taste."

"My opinion is worth nothing," said Prue; "but it seems to me that my cousin Tradescant dresses with much elegance."

"Pshaw!—a puppy—a coxcomb, who thinks of nothing but adorning his person, and spending

his time in frivolous amusements. I am wofully disappointed in my son, niece. I looked for something better, after all that has been done for him."

"You must make some allowances for Tradescant, uncle. He has been exposed to a great many temptations, and it is not surprising if he should have yielded to some of them."

"A great deal a girl like you, Prue, brought up in the country, can know about it," rejoined the Lord Mayor. "Tradescant's conduct is not to be defended. What new whim do you think he has got in his foolish head? Nay, you'll never guess, so I may as well tell you. He wants to get married."

"Married!" exclaimed both girls together.

"And you'll be still more surprised when you learn who is the object of his choice."

"I hope she is some one whom you can approve, uncle," rejoined Prue, turning pale.

"Hum! not altogether. The girl is pretty, but

coquettish and frivolous, and not the sort of person I should have desired for my son's wife. However, you have seen her, and can judge. She was at Guildhall the other night, and danced with Herbert."

"Herbert only danced with Alice Walworth—he told us so himself," said Milly. "She can't be the person."

"Why, she disappeared from the ball, as we were told, in a very mysterious manner," cried Prue. "It can't possibly be Alice."

"You are both wrong, for Alice it is," replied Sir Gresham. "As to the disappearance, it turns out to have been a mere trick played upon Herbert by Tradescant, to which the girl must have been a party, but she never left the Hall. However, it was a very silly proceeding, and reflects little credit upon either of them. In my opinion, Herbert has been very badly used, for certainly the girl seemed much pleased with him."

"As was natural, after the great service he had rendered her," cried Milly. "I cannot understand how she can have changed so suddenly."

"She is a coquette, and has no real regard for either," replied the Lord Mayor. "Herbert pleased her well enough till Tradescant presented himself, when, dazzled by the false glitter of the latter, she at once gave him the preference. This is your hopeful cousin's present plan of reform, Prue. What think you of it?"

"I trust it may conduce to his happiness," she rejoined; "but I don't think she is good enough for him."

"There I differ with you, niece. I think her a great deal too good to be thrown away on such a worthless fellow."

"Oh! uncle, I'm sorry to hear you speak thus disparagingly of your son. It is not like you to be uncharitable and unforgiving."

"I hope I am neither, niece; and if I perceive any signs of amendment in Tradescant, I shall be

the first to hail them, but I discern none as yet."

"Then you don't think this marriage will accomplish much?"

"I have no great hopes of it, I confess."

"Then why allow it to take place, uncle?"

"I may have little to do with it. Tradescant is very wilful, and may set my authority at defiance."

"I cannot believe this of him," said Prue.

"Well, time will show," replied the Lord Mayor.

At this moment Tomline entered the room, and said, "Sir Felix Bland and Mr. Walworth are below, and desire to see your lordship."

"Say I'll wait upon them immediately," replied Sir Gresham. "I suppose you can guess Mr. Walworth's errand?" he added, as soon as the man was gone. "He has come to talk over the marriage."

"I shall be very anxious to hear the result of the interview," said Milly.

"You'll hear something that will surprise you in the course of the morning. Good-by to you both!" said her father, quitting the room.

"Oh, Milly!" exclaimed Prue, as soon as they were alone together—"oh, Milly!" she sobbed, giving way to the emotion with which she had been struggling, and bursting into tears, "I can't bear the thoughts of this marriage. I hope it won't take place. And yet what business have I to wish so? Tradescant has probably never given a thought to me, and never might have done. Alice is very pretty—and may bring him a large dowry—and they may be very happy together—but I d-o-o-n't—th-th-ink—they will."

"I hope they mayn't have the chance," replied Milly; "but we must wait papa's decision—though, after all, Tradescant mayn't choose to be guided by it. Cheer up, dear Prue. Our dreams may yet be realised."

"Mine have been very foolish," replied Prue; "but they are over now."

VII.

HOW THE MATRIMONIAL PROJECT CAME TO AN END.

THE Lord Mayor found both the gentlemen who had been announced to him, in the drawing-room, and after shaking hands with them very heartily, expressing his pleasure at seeing them, and offering them chairs, begged to know the object of their visit, looking at Mr. Walworth as he made the inquiry.

The old hosier, who was dressed in his best, and wore a well-powdered bob-major and a fine muslin cravat, was visibly embarrassed, and after making an ineffectual attempt to open the business, and

getting very red in the face, applied to the little alderman.

"Do me the favour to explain the matter to his lordship, Sir Felix," he said. "I can't get on at all."

"With the greatest pleasure in life, my dear Mr. Walworth," replied Sir Felix. Then rising, and bowing to the Lord Mayor, he thus addressed him: "It is my happy privilege to communicate to your lordship—though, possibly, you may be already aware of the fact — that your son, Mr. Tradescant Lorimer, captivated, as well he might be, by the charms of my friend Mr. Walworth's lovely daughter—an only child, allow me to observe — and considering her in all respects, personally, mentally, and pecuniarily, calculated to make him happy—persuading himself also, and not improperly, as the event showed, that he had succeeded in gaining the affections of the beauteous Alice, made her an offer of his hand. Coming from a person of Mr. Lorimer's figure and breeding

—of so much promise and of such brilliant prospects—the only son of a distinguished and wealthy father—in a word, coming from *your* son, Sir Gresham, the offer could not be otherwise than gratifying to Mr. Walworth. And so that gentleman felt it. In a manner which did credit to his judgment and feelings, he at once evinced his high sense of the value of the connexion by volunteering to give his daughter a magnificent dowry — a dowry which a nobleman would not despise. I have only to add that my good friend Mr. Walworth, entertaining the profoundest respect for your lordship, and finding you had not been consulted on the point, would allow no engagement to be entered into till your sanction should be obtained; and it is with the view of ascertaining your lordship's feelings on the subject that he has sought the present interview. Permit me to add, on my own part, that I cannot conceive a couple better suited to each other than these two amiable young persons, alike graced by nature, alike rich

in all the ingredients essential to conjugal felicity, and alike fortunate in the possession of parents opulent and liberal. No difficulties, as it seems to me, can exist in the way of a union so desirable on both sides, and it will always be satisfactory to me to reflect that I have been instrumental—in however slight a degree—in bringing it about."

"I'm a man of few words, Sir Gresham," said Mr. Walworth, as the little alderman sat down, evidently very well satisfied with his florid oration, "and cannot express myself in such eloquent terms as those employed by my good friend Sir Felix. But I will try to speak to the point. I have had no hand in this matrimonial scheme, my lord, neither has my wife. The thing has come about quite suddenly and unexpectedly. The young folks settled it between 'em—apparently without much ado—and then came to me. Well, it would be useless to deny that the match was agreeable to me, so I at once consented—on the understanding, however, that there should be no positive en-

gagement till your lordship had been consulted; and that's what I came about this morning."

"You have acted in a very straightforward manner, Mr. Walworth," rejoined Sir Gresham, "and I am greatly beholden to you."

"And now a word as to my daughter's fortune, my lord. Sir Felix has been pleased to assert that I mean to give her a magnificent dowry. That's saying too much."

"Excuse me, my dear sir, I don't think so," interposed the little alderman; "neither, I am convinced, will the Lord Mayor think so, when acquainted with the amount."

"If Alice marries with my consent and approval, as she will if she marries your son, my lord," said Walworth, "I mean to give her a plum."

"There!—was I wrong, my lord!" cried Sir Felix. "Isn't that magnificent? Your son has got a prize such as falls to the lot of few—a lovely girl with a hundred thousand pounds. Egad! it's

very well some of those gay young fortune-hunters didn't know this t'other night, Mr. Walworth, or Alice might have been run away with in right earnest."

"If she *had* run away, the rascal who induced her to take such an imprudent step would have profited little by it, Sir Felix. He should never have had a shilling from me. I hate a fortune-hunter."

"Agreed, my dear Mr. Walworth. If there's one character more odious and contemptible than another, it is a fortune-hunter."

"Yes, it's very bad; but when the fortune-hunter is a rake and a gambler into the bargain, as is not unfrequently the case, he's a far worse character."

"Far worse, sir, I agree with you," said the Lord Mayor.

"But we mustn't stigmatise all young men of ton as rakes and gamblers because they play a little now and then, and divert themselves at Ranelagh

and the masquerades," said Sir Felix. "Nobody thinks the worse of them for doing so."

"But I do," replied Walworth, stoutly. "I object to a rake or a gambler, and I won't have such a one for a son-in-law. I feel safe with Mr. Tradescant Lorimer, assured that with such an example before his eyes as is offered by his respected father, he cannot fail to be steady."

"An old fool!" mentally ejaculated Sir Felix, laughing in his sleeve. "'Twould be a pity to undeceive him."

"Sir Felix, will you allow me a word with Mr. Walworth?" said Sir Gresham.

"I don't like leaving them together," thought Sir Felix, alarmed at the Lord Mayor's manner. "But there's no help for it. I must go. Certainly, my lord — certainly," he added, aloud. Then whispering, "Of course your lordship will close with him. Capital match for Tradescant. A plum isn't to be picked up every day, even in the City—ha! ha!" And bowing to both gen-

tlemen, he retired to the farther end of the room.

"Mr. Walworth," said Sir Gresham, in a calm and serious tone, "before proceeding further, it will be necessary that we should come to a clear understanding. I share in the opinions you have expressed as to the character and qualifications of the person to whom you may be disposed to give your daughter in marriage. Let me ask you, sir, whether you know much of my son, and whether —judging from what you do know—you think he comes up to your standard?"

"Since you put it to me so directly, Sir Gresham," replied Walworth, "I must own that I know little of him save by report, and that is highly favourable. But, indeed, I have not deemed it necessary to make any inquiries, as I feel perfectly satisfied that, with such model before him, the young gentleman could not go far wrong."

"I am obliged by your good opinion, sir. But

in a matter of so much importance as your daughter's happiness, it is your bounden duty—excuse me for saying so—to make careful inquiries, and till this has been done, a meeting like the present is premature."

"But I repeat, Sir Gresham, that I am perfectly satisfied, and should consider it an insult to you to make any inquiries about your son."

"If you had done so, sir, you would have spared me much pain. You now compel me, very reluctantly, to give you information which you ought to have obtained elsewhere."

"How, Sir Gresham?" cried Walworth, looking very much perplexed.

"In no transaction in life, Mr. Walworth, have I intentionally deceived any one with whom I have had dealings, and I shall not begin now. Whatever pain it costs me to make the avowal, I shall not hesitate. You say you object to a rake and a gambler. I grieve to say, sir, my son is both."

"You amaze me, Sir Gresham!" cried Wal-

worth, petrified. "Had I heard this from any other lips than your own, I should not have believed it."

"I would rather you had learnt it from others than from me, sir, but, as an honest man, I am bound to speak truth, even to my own detriment. What is more, Mr. Walworth, I fear my son cannot escape the imputation of being mercenary in his proposal; for, unless I am much mistaken, your daughter's expected fortune, rather than her beauty and merits, constitutes her chief attraction with him."

"Oh dear! oh dear!" groaned Walworth. "One should never judge by appearances. But perhaps I spoke rather too strongly just now. I could never have supposed——"

"Make no apologies, my dear Mr. Walworth. What you said was perfectly right and proper, and showed you have your daughter's happiness and welfare really at heart. My own experience convinces me that the utmost caution ought to be

exercised in the choice of a son-in-law, and that it is better—far better—a girl should remain single all her days than marry a man of indifferent character."

"No doubt of it, Sir Gresham," responded Walworth, dolefully. "But I fear I shan't get Alice and her mother to agree with me. I needn't say it would have been a pride and a pleasure to me to be connected with you, but after what you have said, the engagement cannot take place."

"I don't think either party will suffer much, sir," rejoined the Lord Mayor. "They have not had time to form a strong attachment to each other. It must have been mere caprice on your daughter's part, and I have told you frankly what I believe to have been my son's motives in making the proposal. If the circumstances had been different, and I had approved of the match, I should have required that the young people should know more of each other before an engagement was entered into."

"Your lordship is quite right," said Walworth; "the matter has been arranged without due consideration, and is very properly brought to an end. I much regret that I have inadvertently caused you pain; but I can assure you that the respect I have hitherto entertained for you will not be diminished by this interview."

"Ahem!" coughed Sir Felix, from the other end of the room. "All settled, eh?"

"All settled," replied the Lord Mayor.

"Delighted to hear it," cried the little alderman, hurrying towards them. "But how's this? You both look very grave."

"The negotiation is at an end," replied the Lord Mayor.

"At an end!" exclaimed Sir Felix, starting back in dismay. "Bless me! I hope not. But what has occurred to interrupt so desirable an arrangement? Can't it be set right?"

"I fear not," replied the Lord Mayor. "Mr. Walworth has thought better of his proposition."

"Not retreated from his offer, surely?" cried Sir Felix. "As a man of his word, he can't do that. No! no! we must have the plum."

The old hosier winked at the Lord Mayor.

"I've changed my mind, Sir Felix," he observed. "It shan't be said that Alice was married merely for her money."

"But, my dear sir, it's too late to change your mind. You must abide by your offer."

"If Mr. Tradescant Lorimer really loves my daughter, he'll take her without a fortune," observed Walworth; "I won't hold out a bribe."

"Oh! that's it, eh?" thought Sir Felix—"he has got alarmed. No one can be more disinterested than Tradescant; but after your promise, he will naturally expect——"

"I can't help what he expects," interrupted Walworth. "I don't mean to give it."

Just as the words were uttered the door was opened, and the young gentleman in question burst into the room.

"Ah! here he comes," cried Sir Felix. "We shall see what he says to the change."

"I'll put him to the proof by carrying on the deception a little longer," muttered Walworth.

"Good morning, Mr. Walworth," said Tradescant. "I heard you were here, and came down as quickly as I could to see you. All satisfactorily arranged, I trust?"

"Not quite, sir," replied the old hosier.

"There's a slight hitch, I am sorry to say," remarked Sir Felix, "owing to Mr. Walworth's declining to give his daughter the fortune he promised her."

"Is it possible?" cried Tradescant.

"Perfectly true," replied Walworth. "My daughter shan't be a catch for a fortune-hunter."

"A fortune-hunter, Mr. Walworth! I cannot allow such an injurious term to be applied to me. My attachment to Alice is purely disinterested——"

"I said so—I said so," interrupted Sir Felix—"purely disinterested."

"Then it cannot matter that I have seen fit to withdraw my offer."

"Pardon me, sir, but it *does* matter," cried Tradescant. "You won't, I am sure, behave so unhandsomely."

"Unhandsome or not, I've made up my mind not to give her a fortune," rejoined Walworth. "But if you regard Alice merely for herself, and not for what she is to bring you, that won't signify."

"But it *does* signify most materially, Mr. Walworth," exclaimed Tradescant, angrily. "Allow me to observe, that I consider this very extraordinary conduct on your part, sir. If you have made up your mind not to give Alice a fortune, I have made up mine not to marry her without one."

"I suspected as much," said Walworth. "Very disinterested affection indeed!"

"You must be labouring under a most singular delusion, Mr. Walworth," pursued Tradescant, "if you can for an instant suppose that a person of my figure and pretensions would throw himself away upon any woman."

"D'ye hear that, Mr. Walworth?" observed Sir Felix. "If you want such a son-in-law as Mr. Lorimer, you must pay for him."

"So it seems," rejoined the old hosier.

"Your daughter's a very charming girl, and might tempt me to commit a folly, but I can't afford to marry for love," said Tradescant. "I've a few debts, which the plum you were good enough to promise me would enable me to discharge."

"Faith, the son's as frank in his own way as the father," thought Walworth.

"What says Sir Gresham?" inquired Sir Felix. "We have not had his opinion."

"I think Mr. Walworth quite right," he replied. "I should give nothing were I in his place, and therefore I can ask him for nothing."

Here the door was thrown open by a couple of lacqueys in state liveries to admit the Lady Mayoress and a party with her. Her ladyship, who was very richly dressed, and looked all smiles and affability, was accompanied by Mrs. Walworth, to whom she was evidently playing the agreeable. Lady Dawes and Mrs. Chatteris followed with Alice, the young lady looking enchanted by the extraordinary attentions lavished upon her.

VIII.

WOMEN OF THE WORLD.

MANY circumstances conspired to make Lady Lorimer desirous that her son should marry. If he could find a wife with rank as well as money so much the better—but money was indispensable. In Alice's case one was provided to his hand, who, though she might lack some things, had the grand requisite.

On the previous evening, after their promenade in the City Mall, Lady Dawes and Mrs. Chatteris had proceeded at once to Cheapside to convey to their mother the surprising intelligence that Tradescant had made a proposal of marriage to Alice

Walworth, and that the young lady's father had promised to give her a plum. The latter announcement dispelled any objections that Lady Lorimer might have raised to the match. Hitherto, the Walworths had appeared in her eyes low and vulgar people, with whom it was scarcely possible to associate. Now she began to see merits in them which she could not discern before. Old Walworth was stupid and had a bad manner, but then he was a nonentity, and his wife was rather an agreeable woman. If they proved objectionable, it would be easy to drop them, after the marriage. Alice was decidedly pretty, and, as Mrs. Tradescant Lorimer, would no doubt be greatly admired. Clearly, she was a prize that must not be allowed to slip through her son's fingers. Thus Lady Lorimer argued, and her daughters entirely agreed with her in opinion.

"You must carry this marriage through, mamma," observed Lady Dawes. "It is of the last importance to Tradescant."

"I see its importance as well as you, dearest Livy," replied the Lady Mayoress; "and it shan't fall through if I can prevent it. I dare say we shall have some difficulty with your papa—but so we had about your own marriage with Sir John Dawes—yet I managed *that*."

"Heigho!" exclaimed Lady Dawes.

"Wherefore that sigh?" inquired her mother. "Surely you don't regret that splendid match."

"Oh no, mamma; though perhaps I might have been happier if——however, we won't talk of that. Let us keep to Tradescant's affair. Mr. Walworth is coming here to-morrow morning to see papa before he goes to the Mansion House, and talk the matter over, and I have begged Mrs. Walworth and Alice to come too, promising to meet them. I needn't ask you to give them a gracious reception."

"They shall have nothing to complain of—but I'm glad you prepared me," replied the Lady

Mayoress. "To-morrow the engagement must be concluded. But I won't say a word about it in the interim to Sir Gresham. He's so angry at present with Tradescant that he won't listen to reason. But this marriage will set all right."

"I fear nothing will be done for my poor Tom," observed Mrs. Chatteris, with a sigh.

"We must get this important matter settled first, and then we'll think of Tom," replied her mother.

On the following morning, as agreed, Lady Dawes and Mrs. Chatteris came betimes to meet Alice and her mother, and shortly afterwards the expected guests arrived.

While Mr. Walworth and Sir Felix were shown into the drawing-room, Mrs. Walworth and her daughter were ushered into Lady Lorimer's boudoir, where all three ladies were waiting to receive them, and where a very sentimental scene was enacted. On Alice's appearance, Lady Lorimer hurried towards her, clasped her to her bosom with

effusion, shed tears over her, and called her her daughter.

Lady Dawes and Mrs. Chatteris were equally profuse in their manifestations of affection. Assuring Alice with apparent sincerity that they should be delighted to have her for a sister, they declared that Tradescant's choice could have fallen on no one more agreeable to them than herself.

To Mrs. Walworth all three were exceedingly courteous, and though she was a little awed at first, they soon set her completely at her ease. Mrs. Walworth, who had heard the Lady Mayoress and her married daughters described as exceedingly haughty, thought they had been entirely misrepresented, and that they were the most amiable, unassuming people imaginable. In short, the interview was perfectly satisfactory. Alice and her mother were pleased; and Lady Lorimer and her daughters were pleased—because their object was accomplished.

After a while the Lady Mayoress proposed an adjournment to the drawing-room, to see whether the gentlemen had concluded the arrangement, and accordingly they all proceeded thither.

IX.

SMOOTH SPEAKING AND PLAIN SPEAKING.

ALL the ladies were too much occupied with what was passing in their own minds to notice the discomposure of the gentlemen; or if they did notice it at all, they were far from attributing it to the right cause. True to his character for politeness, Sir Felix flew to the Lady Mayoress on her entrance, and, in his usual honeyed phrases, expressed his delight at beholding her. To Alice's great surprise, however, Tradescant did not advance, but remained standing where he was, as if unconscious of her presence. Mr. Walworth like-

wise was greatly embarrassed, and his perplexity was increased when the Lady Mayoress, as soon as she could liberate herself from Sir Felix, went up to him, and said, "I must shake hands with you, Mr. Walworth. I must tell you how handsomely —how generously—how nobly you have behaved."

"But, your ladyship——" cried Walworth.

"I know what you would say, sir. I know your modesty; but you must allow me to speak of your conduct as I feel it deserves: it is princely; we all appreciate it. Your daughter is very charming, and very amiable—beautiful in person, and refined in manner—everything I could desire, in short, and I esteem my son singularly fortunate in having secured her affections."

"Madam, this is too much! I can't bear it," cried the old hosier. "It cuts me to the quick."

"I had no idea he was so sensitive," thought Lady Lorimer. "Excuse me, my dear Mr. Walworth; I wouldn't distress you for the world, but I must tell you how enchanted we all are with the

alliance my son is about to form, and how highly we think of your conduct."

"No more, madam, I entreat of you!—no more!"

"Very well, sir," cried the Lady Mayoress, rather surprised. "I have done. How extraordinarily sensitive he must be."

Meanwhile, the Lord Mayor, though he felt the situation very awkward and embarrassing, good naturedly advanced towards Alice and her mother, and greeted them with much kindness and courtesy.

Shocked and surprised at Tradescant's unaccountable behaviour, Lady Dawes went up to him to call him to order.

"What's the matter?" she said. "Is this your gallantry? Why don't you speak to your intended?"

And she pushed him towards Alice.

"Good morning, Alice," he said. "Hope you're quite well."

"Is that all you've got to say to me?" she rejoined, in a tone of pique. "You scarcely deserve an answer, sir. I thought you would be charmed to see me, but you appear quite cold. The Lady Mayoress has been excessively kind. I'm sure I shall like her vastly."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Tradescant, in an indifferent tone.

"Yes, indeed, sir. You don't seem to care much about it. I don't think I'll have you unless you change your manner. You don't look like a lover at all to-day."

"Don't I?" exclaimed Tradescant. "Sorry for it. I'm confoundedly sleepy," he added, yawning. "Didn't get to bed till four o'clock this morning."

"Not till four? What a dreadful rake! But you must leave off these bad habits when you are married."

"By-the-by, I *was* lucky at basset last night. What d'ye think? I broke the bank at Picard's,

just before the fire broke out. You've heard of the fire, eh?"

"Hush!" cried Alice, alarmed. "Don't speak so loud, or papa may hear you."

"Never mind! I don't care if he does."

"But I do, for he objects to play, and if he suspects you gamble, he'll withdraw his consent."

"Well, let him——"

"Don't be so hasty. You're quite unlike yourself this morning, Mr. Lorimer. You're not like the same person you were yester-evening in the City Mall. Late hours and play, they say, spoil the sweetest tempers. You must promise me to behave better when you're married."

"Alice," said Tradescant, in an altered tone, "I won't attempt to keep up this delusion longer. You must no longer regard me as a suitor. I resign all claims to your hand. I restore you the troth you plighted to me yesterday. You are once more free!"

"Can I believe my ears?" she cried. "But no! no! it is *not* true. It is done to try me."

"It is perfectly true," rejoined Tradescant, unmoved. "A difficulty has arisen on your father's part."

"On *his* part! Oh, then it can be easily set right. What is it?—what is it?"

"He declines to fulfil his promise, that's all," returned Tradescant. "He won't give you a fortune; and that being an essential condition—an essential condition, I repeat—the engagement is at an end."

"He can't be so cruel, I'm sure," cried Alice, rushing up to her father. "Say you will at once, papa—say you will give me the plum."

But Mr. Walworth shook his head.

"Not a shilling," he said. "If Mr. Lorimer really loves you, he'll take you without a fortune."

Poor Alice was flying back to Tradescant, when the Lady Mayoress majestically interposed.

"Let me put the question to Mr. Walworth," she said. "Do you decidedly refuse, sir, to give your daughter the fortune you promised her?"

"Under present circumstances, I decidedly do, madam. As I have just said, if your son is sincerely attached to my daughter, he will not make her fortune a point."

"Allow me to set you right on that score, Mr. Walworth—it is the main point. I must speak plainly to you, I find. It was the promised fortune, and not the connexion, that induced me to consent. Do you think I would suffer my son to enter a family like yours, unless there was something to compensate him? If he chooses to go to St. Mary-axe for a wife instead of St. James's, it is because he expects to get money, whereas in the other case he might only get rank. A man of the world would understand this, Mr. Walworth, and I thought you *did* understand it, sir."

"Hear me, madam," cried the old hosier.

"No, sir, I won't hear you," rejoined the Lady Mayoress, with asperity. "You have acted most improperly. You have come to us under false pretences. You have taken us in, sir."

"Your ladyship's anger is excusable," observed Mrs. Walworth, "and I can make every allowance. But you go too far."

"On the contrary, I restrain myself, madam," rejoined Lady Lorimer, haughtily. "I reproach myself with having countenanced this match at all. I might have known what to expect in dealing with vulgar people."

"Vulgar people!" cried Mrs. Walworth. "You have changed your tone with a vengeance, madam. Just now we were elegant and well bred."

"Because——But no matter. You appear in your true colours now, madam."

"And so do you, madam," rejoined Mrs. Walworth, plucking up a spirit. "I can discover no reason why you should give yourself these airs. A hosier's wife is as good as a draper's wife any

day, and I have yet to learn that Cheapside is a more fashionable quarter than St. Mary-axe."

"This is to my face!" cried the Lady Mayoress. "Oh! that I should live to be thus insulted! What an escape we have had!"

"You don't share, I trust, in her ladyship's displeasure?" said Mrs. Walworth, casting imploring looks at Lady Dawes and Mrs. Chatteris, both of whom regarded her distantly and haughtily. "I am not to blame. I can't help it. You said you liked me just now."

"Things have changed," replied Lady Dawes.

"Then I have been valued solely for my fortune?" cried Alice.

"To be sure, you silly child," rejoined Lady Dawes, in a supercilious tone. "What else did you suppose you were valued for?—not for your wit, your beauty, or your birth?"

"Your ladyship, at all events, led me to believe so," said Alice.

"I never approved of the match, and am glad

it is broken off," observed Mrs. Chatteris, scornfully. "I thought it most unsuitable to Tradescant—in fact, a shocking mésalliance."

"You told me quite the contrary just now, madam," said Alice.

"You were very simple to credit me," replied Mrs. Chatteris; "but I am perfectly candid now."

"Somewhat too much so, methinks," rejoined Alice. "Come, papa," she added to Mr. Walworth, "we have been here quite long enough. I am infinitely obliged by your refusal to give me a fortune. It was the kindest thing you could have done. I've had a lesson I shan't easily forget."

"Stay!" cried the Lord Mayor. "You are under a misconception, and I cannot allow you to depart without setting it right. If any person has been deceived in this matter it is Mr. Walworth. He has behaved most handsomely throughout, as I can testify. He came here prepared to fulfil his promise. He came here under the im-

pression that he was about to confide his daughter to a man of honour and solidity of character; but when he found out his mistake, and that it was to a rake and a gambler that his daughter was engaged, he very properly broke off the match."

"And from whom did he learn this unfavourable character of our son, Sir Gresham?" demanded Lady Lorimer.

"From me, madam," answered the Lord Mayor. "Do you think I would conceal the truth? Do you think I would be a party to any deception? No consideration should have induced me to keep silence. Mr. Walworth, I repeat, has acted in a perfectly straightforward and honourable manner. So far from blaming him, I approve of his conduct. I should have acted in the same manner myself. If Tradescant is disappointed he has only to thank himself. If you are disappointed, you have no just cause to be so—neither have any other members of my family, for you knew exactly how the case stood. I could have wished the matter

had not gone thus far—but it is well it has gone no farther. I should be sorry for Alice, but that I think she is rather to be congratulated than pitied."

"It is not pleasant to have one's illusions rudely dispelled, however salutary it may be," Alice replied. "But I dare say I may some day be of your lordship's opinion."

"On my soul the girl has a great deal of spirit," mentally ejaculated Sir Felix.

"As all the blame is to be thrown on my shoulders," remarked Tradescant, who had conducted himself with great nonchalance throughout, "it is lucky they are able to bear it. It doesn't give me much concern to be called a rake and a gambler, because every man of fashion is liable to be so designated, and with some people it would be accounted a recommendation. I am much obliged to your lordship," he added to the Lord Mayor, "for the good character you have given me, but trust this will be the last applica-

tion of the kind made to you. If Mr. Walworth has been wilfully blind to the advantages of the connexion he might have formed, and fancies his daughter has had an escape, I leave him to the full enjoyment of that opinion. And if Alice doesn't grieve more than I shall that the engagement is terminated, I don't think she is likely to break her heart. Ladies and gentlemen, I have the honour to wish you all a very good morning." And with a ceremonious bow to the company he quitted the room.

"Your chair waits, madam," said the Lady Mayoress, significantly, to Mrs. Walworth.

"My chariot is at the door, my dear madam," interposed good-natured Sir Felix. "It shall take you and Miss Walworth home, if you please."

"You are very obliging, Sir Felix," she replied. "I accept the offer with gratitude."

"Permit me to conduct you to it," said the little alderman, tendering her an arm.

"I won't ask you to stay longer, madam," said

the Lord Mayor, "since, after such a scene as has just occurred, you must be naturally anxious to escape. But allow me to see you to the carriage, Alice, or I shall think we don't part friends."

"That is the last thing I should desire, my lord," she replied, taking his arm.

Curtseying formally to the Lady Mayoress and her daughters, who bent in a stately manner in return, Mrs. Walworth and Alice, escorted as we have described, quitted the room, followed by the old hosier.

X.

AN INCENSED FATHER.

HALF an hour afterwards, Tradescant was in his own room, lounging on a sofa, sipping his chocolate, and reading the *Flying Post* as composedly as if nothing particular had happened, when Tiplady suddenly entered with a countenance of dismay, exclaiming, "Sir! sir! your father——"

"Well, what of him?" demanded the young man, in a languid and indifferent tone.

"I don't like his looks, sir. Hadn't you better get up?"

"Why should I disturb myself, Tip?" rejoined

Tradescant, calmly, and without shifting his position.

"Because——But here he is, sir!" cried the valet.

As the words were uttered, the Lord Mayor entered the room, closely followed by Crutchet and Candish. Tiplady had not exaggerated in stating that his lordship's looks boded mischief. Unquestionably they did so. After advancing a few paces, he stood still, sternly regarding his son, whose careless attitude served to increase his displeasure. Before making any remark, he signed to Tiplady to leave the room, and the valet, without pausing for any more emphatic injunction, beat a retreat, closing the door after him.

"Now, sir, get up!" cried the Lord Mayor, in a voice of thunder. "Are you going to lie there all day?"

"Pardon me, sir," exclaimed the young man, springing to his feet. "I was so much interested in this account of the fire at Picard's that I didn't

notice your presence. A terrible fire, sir! The newspaper says you were at it."

"Does the newspaper mention how the fire originated, sir?" demanded Sir Gresham, sternly. "Does it give a list of all the gamblers and sharpers who were there assembled? Does it describe the fracas which led to the conflagration? Perhaps you might be able to furnish some additional particulars."

"I, sir!" exclaimed Tradescant, in confusion.

"Yes, you, sir!" repeated his father, vehemently. "I have certain information that you were one of the gamblers present. Look me in the face and deny it if you can."

"I shall not attempt to deny it, sir," said Tradescant. "I know whence you obtained your information," he added, glancing at Candish.

"I am thankful at least to be spared the shame and disgrace of having you brought before me at the Mansion House Court to-day, in connexion with the two sharpers Gleek and Bragge."

"Are they in custody?" inquired Tradescant.

"They are, and you may rely on it they shan't go unpunished. But what shall I say to you, sir, who have associated with these infamous persons, and who may become as bad as them if not checked in your scandalous career?"

"Sir!" exclaimed his son.

"Don't interrupt me. If I do not publicly reprimand you, as I must have done had you been unhappily brought before me to-day, I should be wanting to myself if I allowed conduct like yours to pass unpunished. You have disgraced the name you bear. You have forfeited the character of a gentleman. You have turned a deaf ear to all my remonstrances—you laugh at my threats, and deem them idle—but you will find I am now in earnest. The day of grace is past."

"Oh! don't say so, sir!" interposed Crutchet. "His errors are great, no doubt, but not unpardonable. Remember he is your son."

"I have no longer a son," said the Lord

Mayor, in a terrible voice. "I cast him off for ever!"

Tradescant looked astounded, but made no effort to mitigate his father's wrath. Crutchet, however, threw himself at the Lord Mayor's feet. "Oh, sir, recal those awful words!" he ejaculated. "Do not—do not discard him."

At the same time Candish approached Tradescant, and said, in a low tone, "Down on your knees, young man, and implore your father's forgiveness."

But Tradescant refused to move.

"Arise, sir," said Sir Gresham to Crutchet. "You plead for him in vain. I am as inflexible as I should be if I were simply the magistrate and not the justly incensed father. Hear me, sir," he continued, with additional severity, to Tradescant. "You will leave this house to-day, and not return to it again. I won't suffer you to approach me more. A sufficient allowance shall be made for your maintenance, though not for waste. But mark me well, and be assured I shall not swerve

from what I say, if you exceed this allowance, or squander it in gambling and riot, it will thenceforward entirely cease."

"Again, I conjure you, ask his forgiveness," whispered Candish.

But Tradescant still looked sullen and obstinate.

"That nothing may prevent you from commencing a new and honourable career," pursued the Lord Mayor, "all your debts shall be paid, but I must have an exact statement of them without delay. I know he has borrowed money from you, Crutchet. How much?"

"Oh! don't heed me, sir! I don't desire to be repaid. I gave it freely."

"My son ought to have blushed to borrow money from you at all," rejoined Sir Gresham; "but he is baser than I deem him if he would condescend to accept it as a gift. Again I ask how much you have lent him?"

"I cannot answer the question, sir," replied Crutchet, shaking his head.

"You won't," cried the Lord Mayor. "Zounds! sir, you are enough to drive me mad. You'll provoke me to dismiss you, if you continue thus obstinate."

"Your lordship will do as you please," replied the old man, with a look of resignation. "I shall have little left to live for if your son goes."

"I cannot allow Mr. Crutchet to suffer for me," said Tradescant, turning round and confronting his father. "Since your lordship talks of dismissing him, it is right you should know he has lent me all his savings."

"All his savings!" exclaimed the Lord Mayor. "Gracious Heaven!—all his savings!"

"Yes, all, sir—so he assured me!"

"What matters it?" cried Crutchet, with a look of extreme distress. "I have no one but myself to provide for. I have no one to come after me."

"I cannot state exactly how much I owe him,"

pursued Tradescant; "but it is a considerable sum —some thousand pounds."

"And he has kept no count of it! he, who is usually so exact!" exclaimed the Lord Mayor. "Oh! Crutchet, I could not have believed this of you!" he added, in a tone of mingled sorrow and anger. "However, you shall be fully paid, and at once. And now, sir," he continued to Tradescant, "you have heard my decision. Pack up your things, and don't let me find you here on my return."

"Your lordship shall be obeyed," rejoined Tradescant.

"All this trumpery shall be sent after you," pursued the Lord Mayor, glancing round the room. "And so, farewell for ever, sir." And he turned to depart.

"Will you let him go?" said Candish, in the same low tone as before. "Speak now, or it will be too late."

"Father—a word!" exclaimed Tradescant, following him. "You have passed a severe sentence upon me—perhaps I deserve it—and therefore have no right to complain; but will you give me a day for reflection?"

"To what end?" demanded the Lord Mayor. "If I thought there was any likelihood——But no! I have been too often deceived to place any faith in your professions."

"Yet do not refuse him, sir," said Crutchet. "If my long and faithful services give me any claim upon you, let me urge it now. For my sake grant this respite."

"I cannot resist the appeal," said Sir Gresham. "Though I have little hope of any good result, yet I will not deprive him of this last chance. You can remain here till to-morrow," he added to Tradescant. "Come with me, Crutchet. My first business shall be to discharge this thoughtless young man's obligations to you."

"Nay, sir——"

"I will take no refusal. I won't have this debt upon my conscience another minute. Come with me to my private room, and I will give you a cheque for five thousand pounds."

"But that is too much, sir, by five hundred pounds."

"Soh! I have elicited the truth at last. In paying you, however, I must have your solemn promise not to lend him money again."

"Speak to him. I think he relents," whispered Candish to Tradescant.

"Have you not one kind word to say to me in parting, father?" demanded Tradescant.

"I have said and done enough," rejoined the Lord Mayor. "I have given you a day for reflection. Let me see how you employ it." And he quitted the room, followed slowly by Crutchet.

Candish, however, remained behind, though his presence was unnoticed by Tradescant, who continued for some minutes as if stupified, with his head upon his breast. After a while the old man

touched his arm, and said, "Don't forget your father's last words. Employ the day profitably. You may yet retrieve yourself."

"You think so! But how?"

"Nay, that is for you to determine. Reflect!"

And he, too, quitted the room, leaving Trades-cant alone.

XI.

PRUE.

"WOULD to Heaven some good genius would befriend me!" cried Tradescant, flinging himself on the couch. "Without such aid I am utterly undone."

As the words escaped him, a tap was heard at the door, and a voice, which he recognised as that of his sister Millicent, inquired, "May we come in?"

"What the deuce does she want? and who has she got with her?" thought Tradescant. "However, I suppose I must admit them. Yes, yes—come in!" he called out.

On this the door opened, and Millicent entered with Prue. On seeing them, Tradescant sprang to his feet, and began to apologise to his cousin for the state of his room, saying he was quite unprepared for such a visit, as his sisters rarely came near him.

"Indeed, I can't conceive what brings Milly now," he said, "unless she has come to laugh at me."

"Mr. Crutchet has sent us to you," replied his sister, gravely.

"Very considerate of him," rejoined Tradescant. "I suppose he thought you would help to cheer me in my affliction."

"Perhaps he might, and we will try to do so if you'll let us. And to begin, I don't think you've any great reason to regret that this engagement with Alice Walworth is at an end. She wouldn't have suited you."

"Very likely not—but her fortune would."

"Oh! Tradescant, I'm sorry to hear you con-

fess yourself so mercenary. Then you had no love for this girl?"

"I was very much in love with her fortune. You look shocked, cousin," he added to Prue. "But my father has set me an example in candour to-day, and I'm bound to imitate it."

"Lay aside this ill-timed levity, I beseech you, brother," said Milly. "We want to have some serious talk with you."

"Now's the time, then," he rejoined. "I never was more seriously inclined in my born days. I've lost my last chance of recruiting my exchequer. My father is frightfully incensed, and talks of turning me out of doors. You'll scarcely wonder, then, that I am beginning to think of turning over a new leaf."

"I'm delighted to hear it," cried Prue. "Don't think about it, but act. Reformation is easy to talk about, but somewhat difficult to practise. However, if you are in earnest, you are sure to succeed. Shall I tell you what to do? Commence

by giving up your present intimates, who, however high their station, are very dangerous acquaintances."

"Who told you so, my little cousin? Milly, I'll be sworn. However, perhaps you are right. They are pleasant, but dangerous. As a reformed character, I must naturally shake them off—or they'll shake me off, which will come to the same thing. What next?"

"Then you must entirely abandon play—shun cards and dice—leave off betting."

"I may try, cousin, but I fear the passion of gaming has got too firm hold of me to be subdued."

"Make a determined effort, and you'll conquer it. It is not like a man to be ruled by so debasing a passion."

"Egad, you rouse better feelings in my breast, Prue. I begin to be ashamed of my weakness. If I could but conquer this all-absorbing passion, the rest would be easy."

"Consider what its gratification leads to," pursued Prue; "to shame, ruin, despair, madness. By its indulgence you will lose all that ought to be dear to you—self-respect, honour, social position. You will be cast off by relatives, avoided by friends, and become an object of pity and contempt to every one. That the picture is not overdrawn you will admit, for you must have seen many a ruined gamester in the condition I describe."

"Very true. I have," said Tradescant.

"But in your case, as I understand, cousin, you have not even had the security of playing with men of honour, but have been preyed upon by knaves and sharpers."

"I have been an egregious fool, no doubt, Prue," replied Tradescant. "But my eyes were opened last night to my folly, and I trust I shall be wiser in future."

"Prue gives you very good advice, brother, and I hope you'll follow it," said Milly.

"He acknowledges his faults, and therefore is in a fair way of amendment," rejoined Prue.

"Well, thus much I will admit, Prue," said Tradescant. "Good advice doesn't seem so unpalatable from you as it does from most other people. I have listened to you as I rarely, if ever, listen to any one else. My father's chaplain, Dr. Dipple, might preach to me for an hour without producing any other effect than sending me to sleep. But I don't understand what interest you can feel in my reformation, Prue? My destiny must be matter of indifference to you."

"Not so," she rejoined, quickly. Then checking herself, she added, with a blush, "Nothing would delight me more than to free you from the fetters you have so long voluntarily worn, and help to place you in the position you are fitted to occupy."

"Faith, I must reform, if only to justify your favourable opinion. I never had half so much good said of me before."

At this moment the door, which had been intentionally left ajar, and at which Crutchet and Candish had been listening, was opened by them.

XII.

IN WHICH A DECISIVE STEP IS TAKEN.

"COME in both of you," cried Tradescant, perceiving them. "I owe you a thousand thanks, Bow Bells, for sending my cousin Prue to me. She has undertaken the difficult task of my reformation."

"I overheard what she said, sir, and heartily wish her success."

"I don't think the task will be difficult, judging by the commencement," said Prue. "But in any case I shan't be discouraged from proceeding with it."

"What will you say, Crutchet, if my fair cousin should induce me to take a place in the counting-house with you?"

"I should say she has worked a miracle," rejoined Crutchet. "But I fear that's not likely."

"She has such powers of persuasion that she can lead me to do anything she wishes," said Tradescant.

"Then I will exert them to the utmost," she rejoined, blushing, "and urge you to take your place with Mr. Crutchet."

"Such a step would have the best effect with Sir Gresham," observed Candish, "and might induce him to alter his decision."

"But what will my friends say?" cried Tradescant.

"Heed them not," rejoined Candish. "Their opinion is not worth thinking about."

"Then my mother and sisters!—I shall never be able to face them. They'll deem the step such a degradation."

"One sister, whom you seem to overlook, won't think it so," observed Milly. "On the contrary, you will rise greatly in her estimation."

"And Tom Chatteris! how shall I pacify him? He will disown me."

"Better be disowned by him than discarded by your father," rejoined Candish. "But you needn't trouble yourself about Captain Chatteris. He won't appear upon the scene for some time to come. Writs are out against him, and he has run away to avoid arrest. Word to this effect was brought to the Lord Mayor just as he was about to start for the Mansion House, and, as you will conceive, did not tend to improve his temper."

"A pretty finale to Tom's career!" exclaimed Tradescant.

"Only what might have been expected," groaned Crutchet. "I always thought it would come to this with him."

"Captain Chatteris may think himself lucky if he doesn't get lodged in the Fleet," observed

Candish. "His object in decamping is evidently to force the Lord Mayor to pay his debts; but he will find himself mistaken. His lordship declares he will do nothing further for him."

"He has done too much already," said Crutchet.

"Well, I own I can take this step with less reluctance, since I shan't be exposed to Tom's raillery," said Tradescant. "I'll come down to you in an hour, Bow Bells."

"Why not now, sir?" rejoined Crutchet. "You may change your mind in the interim."

"Oh! pray go at once!" said Prue, in a tone not to be resisted.

Milly was about to add her entreaties, when the door was opened by Tiplady.

"Sir William Stanhope and Sir Francis Dashwood wait upon your honour," said the valet.

"I can't see them, Tip," rejoined Tradescant. "Deny me."

The valet bowed and retired.

"A good beginning, cousin," cried Prue. "You'll do."

"I won't allow my resolution to be shaken," he rejoined.

Shortly afterwards, the door was again opened by Tiplady.

"Her ladyship desires to see you, sir," said the valet.

"Don't go," whispered Candish.

"Say I'm particularly engaged, Tip. Business to attend to in the counting-house."

"Lord, sir! I must find some other excuse. Her ladyship will never believe *that*."

"Do as you are bid, you impertinent puppy," cried Tradescant.

The valet shrugged his shoulders, and retired.

"You do wisely, I think, to keep out of mamma's way at this crisis," said Milly.

"I won't trust myself with her till the decisive

step is taken," he rejoined. "Come, Bow Bells, I'm ready to accompany you."

"Huzza!" exclaimed Crutchet. "I never was better pleased in my life."

"Zounds! another interruption!" exclaimed Tradescant, as the door was once more opened by Tiplady.

"The Lady Mayoress, Lady Dawes, and Mrs. Chatteris," said the valet.

The three ladies followed close upon the announcement.

The Lady Mayoress looked surprised at the company she found in her son's room, and addressing the two girls, said, somewhat sharply, "What are you doing here, Milly?—and you, too, miss?" she added to Prue. "Go to your own room directly."

But, to her astonishment and indignation, neither of them stirred.

"Don't you hear me?" she continued, still more imperiously.

"Yes, mamma, but——"

"Then go at once. I want to speak to Tradescant." And she signed to Candish and Crutchet to leave the room.

"Stay!" exclaimed Tradescant; "I wish all to hear what I have got to say, and to bear it in memory. The last hour has wrought a great change in me, madam," addressing his mother; "I am no longer the same person."

"So it appears," she rejoined. "Perhaps the message I have just received from Tiplady about the counting-house was correct?"

"It was, madam. From this time forward, I intend to devote myself sedulously to business, and shall try to tread in my father's footsteps."

"Amazement!" exclaimed the Lady Mayoress. "I thought you had a spirit far above shop-keeping."

"I tell you, madam, my opinions have undergone a complete change. I see through the follies I have committed, and am determined to reform."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Crutchet, unable to repress his delight, notwithstanding the awe in which he stood of the Lady Mayoress. "Here'll be rare news for Sir Gresham!"

"And by whom has this wondrous conversion been effected?" demanded Lady Lorimer. "By Mr. Crutchet?"

"No, madam," he replied. "I can't claim the merit of it. I wish I could."

"It is due to my cousin Prue," said Tradescant, taking her hand. "She awakened these better feelings in my breast, and if I become an improved character, it will be mainly owing to her."

"I rejoice to have been instrumental in such a good work in any way," said Prue, "but I think Milly's share in it was as great as mine."

"Very pretty, indeed!" exclaimed the Lady Mayoress, contemptuously. "And can you be such a simpleton, Tradescant, as to allow yourself to be guided by a couple of nonsensical girls?

What do they know of the world, or of the world's opinion? If you want advice, why don't you seek it from those able to afford it?—from me—from your sisters, Lady Dawes and Lady Chatteris—not from inexperienced chits like these."

"If Tradescant takes this step he'll repent it," said Lady Dawes. "He'll forfeit his position in society."

"Oh! if my poor Tom were here, he'd soon laugh him out of such folly," cried Mrs. Chatteris.

"No one will laugh me out of it," said Tradescant, firmly. "My mind is made up. And as it will be useless to prolong this discussion, mother, I must beg you to excuse me. Mr. Crutchet, we will go down to the counting-house together."

"I'm ready, sir," he replied, rubbing his hands with satisfaction. "I never received any order I was better pleased to obey—never."

"Oh, Tradescant!—oh, my dear son—you can't

mean this!" cried the Lady Mayoress, falling on his neck.

"Be firm, sir," cried Candish.

"Who was it spoke?" cried Lady Lorimer. "Why, this is——"

"Mr. Candish, at your ladyship's service," he replied, bowing.

"Oh! it's that dreadful man!" almost shrieked the Lady Mayoress. "I see it now. He's at the bottom of it all. Mischief was sure to happen to a family when such a wretch was admitted into it."

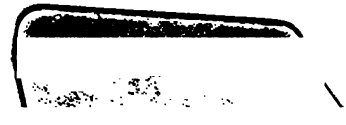
"You ought to thank him, mother," said Tradescant, coldly. "He has helped to save me from ruin. Allow me to pass."

"Oh! I shan't hinder you!" exclaimed the Lady Mayoress, bitterly. "But you'll never be the same to me, after taking this ill-considered—this degrading step."

"Nor to me," said Lady Dawes.

"Nor to me," added Mrs. Chatteris. "Oh, that my poor Tom were here!"

With a kindly glance at Prue and Milly, Tradescant then passed out, followed by Candish and Crutchet, the latter still continuing to rub his hands gleefully.

END OF VOL. II.

C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.